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THE LIFE
OF
THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.

SOMETIME STUDENT OF CHRIST-CHURCH, OXFORD :

COMPRISING

A REVIEW OF HIS POETRY ;
SKETCHES OF THE RISE AND PROGRESS OF METHODISM ;

WITH

NOTICES OF CONTEMPORARY EVENTS
AND CHARACTERS.

BY THOMAS JACKSON.

THESE abilities are the inspired gift of God, rarely bestowed ; and are of power to allay the perturbations of the mind, and set the affections in right tune ; to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's Almightyness, and what He works, and what He suffers to be wrought, with high providence, in His church.—MILTON.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SPECIMENS of Mr. Charles Wesley's letters to his wife—His pastoral duties in London—Intimacy with Mr. and Mrs. Venn—Mr. Venn's religious history—The evangelical Clergy benefited by the Messrs. Wesley and Whitefield—Letter from Mr. Whitefield on the erection of the Tabernacle in Moorfields—Death of the Rev. John Meriton—Hymn on the occasion—Mr. Charles Wesley visits Cornwall—Letters from thence to his wife—The hour of secret prayer observed by the Wesleys, father and sons—Admonitory letter from Mr. John Wesley to his brother—Dangerous illness of Mr. John Wesley—Charles's visit to him in London—Affecting interview between them—Deep concern manifested by the public—Mrs. Charles Wesley seized with the small-pox—Kindness of Lady Huntingdon—Letters of sympathy from Mr. Whitefield—Illness and death of Mr. Charles Wesley's only son—Hymns on the occasion, and on the recovery of his wife—Mr. John Wesley retires to the Bristol Hot-well, and writes his Notes on the New Testament—Retirement of Charles Skelton from the itinerancy Pages 1—45

XIX.

Mr. Charles Wesley visits Norwich with his brother—Wickedness of James Wheatley—Charles Wesley's ministry in that city—Death and character of Grace Bowen—Hymn on the occasion—Letter from Mr. Whitefield in America—Difficulties of the Wesleys with respect to the established Church—Attempt to introduce the Lord's supper into the Methodist chapels—Mr. Charles Wesley's alarm, and resistance of this measure—Letters to Mr. Sellon on this subject—John Hutchinson, and the Rev. George Stonehouse—The Wesleys closeted together at Birstal, where they canvass Towgood's book on Dissent—Conference at Leeds—Thomas Walsh, Joseph Cownley, and the Perronets, engage to desist from administering the Lord's supper—Charles Wesley's abrupt departure from the Conference—Publishes a poetical "Epistle to the Rev. John Wesley"—Letters from Mr. John Wesley to Charles concerning the Church—Correspondence with the Rev. Mr. Walker and Mr. Adam on the same subject—Mr. Charles Wesley visits Margate and Canterbury—Hymn for the Rev. George Stonehouse—Paralytic seizure of Wright, the brother-in-law of the Wesleys—Marriage of Mr. Stonehouse, and of Miss Degge—Earthquake at Lisbon—Threatened invasion of England—Charles Wesley's manuscript Epistles to Howell Harris, Mr. Whitefield, Count Zinzendorf, and others.
Pages 46—98

CHAPTER XX.

Calamitous state of Great Britain in the year 1756—Charles Wesley publishes Hymns for the Fast-day—The Conference held in Bristol—Mr. Charles Wesley visits the societies in Staffordshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire—Uneasiness in various places on the subject of the sacraments, and service in Church-hours—Mr. Crook, of Hunslet—Division in the society at Leeds by Mr. Edwards—Charles Wesley at York—Mr. Ingham—Mr. Grimshaw—Mr. Whitefield—Titus Knight—John Whitford—John Byrom—Unsettled state of the society in Manchester—Letters of Charles Wesley to Mr. Grimshaw, and the society at Leeds, concerning the Methodists and the Church—Mr. Clayton—Mr. Charles Wesley returns by Wednesbury to Bristol—Roger Ball and James Wheatley—Remarks on Methodism and the state of the Church—Several Methodists in Yorkshire and Lancashire, being denied the sacraments in their own chapels, become Dissenters.....Pages 99—134

XXI.

Mr. Charles Wesley desists from his itinerant ministry—The probable reason of this determination—Unfavourable effect upon his own mind—Mr. John Wesley publishes his “Reasons against Separation from the Church”—Charles’s hymns on the subject—Serious accident—Illness of Thomas Walsh—Charles Wesley unjustly accused of unkindness towards him—Letters from Mr. Walsh—His death—Hymns on the occasion—Mr. Charles Wesley visits the daughter of his brother Samuel, at Barnstaple—Letters from thence to Mrs. Wesley—Samuel Wesley’s widow—Charles Wesley publishes “Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind”—Specimens of that publication—He publishes his “Funeral Hymns”—Hymn on the death of young Westley Hall—On Mr. Lampe—Death of the Rev. James Hervey—His “Eleven Letters”—Lines on refusing to write an epitaph on him—Renewed alarm of invasion—Hymns on the subject—Victory over the French fleet—Murder committed by Earl Ferrers upon his steward—Letter from his brother, the Rev. Walter Shirley—Charles Wesley’s kindness to him and his sister—The trial of the Earl—His obduracy, and execution—Three of the Methodist Preachers begin to administer the sacraments at Norwich—Mr. Charles Wesley’s distress on the occasion—His letters to Nicholas Gilbert, John Johnson, John Nelson, Christopher Hopper, and Mr. Grimshaw, upon the occasion—Mr. Grimshaw’s answer—Extreme views taken by him and Charles Wesley—The licensing of the Preachers and chapels—Desire of the Methodists to have the Lord’s supper among themselves, and divine service in Church-hours—Charles Wesley’s desire to get the Preachers episcopally ordained—Letter to him by Joseph Cownley on the subject—Moderation of Mr. John Wesley—Letter from Mr. Perronet to Mr. Charles Wesley, when ill at Bath Pages 135—198

CHAPTER XXII.

Mr. Charles Wesley publishes his "Short Hymns on Select Passages of Scripture"—Specimens of that work—Matthew Henry—Dr. Gell—Bengelius—Spiritual darkness—Christian perfection—Irregularities in the London society, caused by George Bell and others—Mr. John Wesley's views of Christian perfection—He disapproves of his brother's altered opinions—Letter from Mr. Perronet, intimating that Charles was too severe in his censures—Death of Mrs. Perronet—Death of Mr. Grimshaw—His character—Death of Lady Selina Huntingdon—Letters from Mr. Perronet on the mischief done by Maxfield in London—Letter from Mr. Whitefield, in America—Mr. John Wesley's letters to his brother, urging him to diligence—Charles's labours and usefulness in London—He publishes his "Hymns for Children"—His "Hymns on the Trinity"—Specimen—Unjust censure upon Mr. John Wesley, by the Rev. William Jones, of Nayland—Charles Wesley's "Hymns for the Use of Families"—Specimen—Death of his son John James—Consolatory letter addressed to his wife—Anxieties respecting Samuel Pages 199—242

XXII.

Letter from Mr. Whitefield, in America—Death and character of that eminent man—Charles Wesley's "Hymns of Preparation for Death"—Mr. John Wesley cautions his Preachers concerning their doctrine at the Conference of 1770—Publishes various doctrinal propositions in the Minutes—Lady Huntingdon is offended with them, and dismisses Mr. Benson, the Classical Tutor in her college—Mr. Fletcher retires from the presidency of that institution—Mr. John Wesley writes a letter of admonition to her Ladyship, which she resents—Under her direction Mr. Shirley publishes a Circular Letter, inviting Churchmen and Dissenters to assemble in Bristol, at the time of the next Conference, and demand of Mr. Wesley and his Preachers a recantation of the Minutes—Haughty letter of Lady Huntingdon to Mr. Charles Wesley, enclosing the Circular—He is justly offended with her proceedings and spirit—Advises his brother immediately to publish something in opposition to the peculiarities of Calvinism—Churchmen and Dissenters refuse to obey the summons contained in the Circular—Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley send letters of submission to Mr. Wesley—A few of her dependents and personal friends attend the Conference with his permission—Mr. Wesley and the Preachers sign a "Declaration," disavowing the sense which had been erroneously affixed to the Minutes—Mr. Shirley apologizes for his conduct, and confesses that he had mistaken their true meaning—This affair misrepresented by Lady Huntingdon's biographer—Publication of Mr. Fletcher's "Letters to Mr. Shirley"—Thomas Olivers—Mr. Wesley vindicated in putting his friend's "Letters" to the press—Misleading statements of Lady Huntingdon's biographer corrected—Mr. Fletcher is encouraged in his authorship by Charles Wesley—Mr. Shirley publishes his "Narrative," and then retires from the controversy which he

had provoked—Mr. John Wesley writes to Lady Huntingdon, who intimates that he is either dishonest, or in his dotage—Mr. Fletcher answers Shirley's "Narrative"—Richard Hill, Esq., engages in the controversy, but soon proposes to destroy all that he had written, if Mr. Fletcher would do the same—He retires from the controversy with Mr. Fletcher, and is succeeded by the Rev. Rowland Hill, Mr. Berridge, and Mr. Toplady—Mr. Madan affords secret help to Mr. Fletcher's opponents—The Messrs. Hill and Toplady assail Mr. John Wesley's personal character, to the grief of the more respectable Calvinists—Dr. Haweis's testimony in his favour—Charles Wesley's epigrams on the slanderers of his honoured brother—Thomas Olivers—Mr. Fletcher's character as a polemical writer—Unjust censurès upon him by Lady Huntingdon's biographer, the Rev. Edwin Sidney, &c.—Mr. Charles Wesley's decided concurrence in the judgment of Mr. Fletcher on the questions at issue, and advice in the entire controversy—Lady Huntingdon regrets the part which she had acted towards her earliest religious friend, Mr. John Wesley Pages 243—296

CHAPTER XXIII.

Removal of Mr. Charles Wesley's family to London—Letter from Mr. Fletcher—Mr. John Wesley's dangerous illness in Ireland—Report of his death—Mr. Fletcher's letter to Charles, urging him to take his brother's place, and offering his aid—Letter from Mr. Perronet—Case of King Charles I.—Mr. Fletcher's dangerous illness—Charles Wesley's hymn of prayer for his recovery—Death of Charles Perronet—Letter from his father—Case of Dr. Dodd—Mr. Charles Wesley visits him, with his brother, in prison—Hymns on his condition—Verses on his execution—Letters of Charles Wesley to his wife and daughter—Prayer for his brother's life—"The Protestant Association"—Lord George Gordon—Riots of 1780—Letters from Mr. Charles Wesley, describing the scenes of outrage—He publishes a Poem on the occasion, and several Hymns—Conference of 1780—Charles Wesley's fears lest the Methodists should leave the Church Pages 297—328

XXIV.

Mr. Charles Wesley's children—Musical genius of his two sons—Sketch of the early life of Charles—Mr. Kelway—Dr. Boyce—Elegy on the Doctor's death—Handel—Early life of Samuel Wesley—Character of the two brothers—Their select concerts—The Earl of Mornington—General Oglethorpe—Letter of spiritual advice from Mr. Charles Wesley to Mr. Kelway—Letter from the Earl of Mornington—Death of that Nobleman—Charles and Samuel Wesley singularly unsuccessful in their attempts to obtain lucrative situations as musicians—Anecdotes of George III., and George IV.—Bishop Burgess—Letters to Charles, from his uncle and his father—Letter to Samuel from his father—Mary Freeman Shepherd—Samuel embraces the tenets of Popery—The Duchess of Norfolk discloses the fact to his father—Mr. Charles Wesley's deep distress, expressed in several hymns—Mr. John

Wesley's letter to the unhappy youth—Letter to his nephew Charles on the subject of Samuel's Popery—The spirit of the Church of Rome—Samuel Wesley deeply injured by his godfather Madan—Miss Sarah Wesley—Mr. Charles Wesley's intimacy with Lord Mansfield, Dr. Johnson, &c.—He was not the Sabbath-breaking Clergyman, whom Cowper has satirized under the name of Occiduus—Mr. Madan was most probably designed by that name Pages 329—376

CHAPTER XXV.

Mr. John Wesley gives an identity to the Conference by the "Deed of Declaration"—Offence taken by some parties at this important instrument—Mr. Fletcher at the Conference of 1784—State of the Methodists in America when the war of independence had ceased—Dr. Seabury—Dr. Coke—Mr. John Wesley appoints the Doctor and Mr. Asbury joint Superintendents of the Methodist Church in America, and ordains Mr. Vasey and Mr. Whatcoat Elders—He also ordains three of his Preachers to administer the sacraments in Scotland—The principles by which he was guided in these acts—Views of Mr. George Lawson on the alleged episcopal succession—Charles Wesley is greatly offended with his brother's ordinations—His letter to Dr. Chandler on the subject—Correspondence with his brother—Remarks upon it—Mr. John Wesley ordains several others of his Preachers at the Bristol Conference of 1786, and in certain cases allows the opening of Methodist chapels in Church-hours—Mr. Charles Wesley writes from this Conference to Mr. La Trobe, the Moravian Minister in London—He mistakes the character of the Preachers generally—Discrepancy between his theory of Churchmanship, and his practice—He was an advocate of lay-preaching—His strong censures upon ungodly Clergymen—Becomes less hostile to his brother's proceedings—Mr. John Wesley confesses his inability to keep the whole of his people in union with the Church, in consequence of the character and doctrine of several of the Clergy—He ordains three of his Preachers to administer the sacraments in England—Mis-statements of Dr. Pusey and the Messrs. Wilberforce—Some of the Rev. Edwin Sidney's misrepresentations answered Pages 377—423

XXVI.

Character and death of the Rev. Henry Piers, Ebenezer Blackwell, and the Rev. Vincent Perronet—Letters to Miss Briggs—Death of the Rev. John Fletcher—Mr. Charles Wesley's health begins to decline—His ministry at the close of life—Regard for malefactors—Letter to Mr. William Marriott—Hymn descriptive of his feebleness and altered character—Departure of Mr. John Wesley from London—His letters to his brother and to Miss Wesley—Charles's increasing weakness—The last hymn that he wrote—Mr. John Wesley's letters concerning his brother—Charles's death—Mr. John Wesley's letter to his bereaved sister-in-law—Miss Wesley's letter to her uncle, containing the particulars of her father's illness and death—The funeral—Conse-

crated ground—Letter of Mr. Bradburn on the character and death of Mr. Charles Wesley—Various letters from Mr. John Wesley to his sister-in-law and his niece—Mr. Charles Wesley's manuscripts—Unjust censure upon the Methodists by Mr. Wilberforce—Mr. Charles Wesley's family—Mr. John Wesley's intended Life of his brother—Charles's epitaph Pages 424—455

CHAPTER XXVII.

Mr. Charles Wesley's personal appearance—Scholarship—Power as a satirist—As a translator of verse—Epitaphs on his friends—Cordiality of his friendships—Undeviating friendship for his brother—Exemplary kindness in the domestic relations—Loyalty to the House of Brunswick—Character as a Preacher—Peculiarity in his mental constitution—Character of his Methodism and Churchmanship—He was the first that administered the holy communion to the Methodists separately—Advocacy of lay-preaching—Attachment to the Methodists—Self-denial after he ceased to itinerate—Literary accomplishments—General character of his poetry—Occasionally adopted the thoughts of other writers—Dr. Brevint, and Dr. Young—Peculiarities of his versification—Comprehensive range of his subjects—The evangelical character of his hymns—Their influence upon the Methodist body—Superior to those of Dr. Watts—Are adapted to all occasions, field-preaching, social parties, rural scenery, birth-days—Are introductory to the songs of the blessed Pages 456—492

APPENDIX.

BURNING OF THE PARSONAGE-HOUSE AT EPWORTH	493
THE WELLESLEY FAMILY	498
THE REV. SAMUEL WESLEY'S LETTER TO A CURATE	499
THE FOUNDERY	534
SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF HANNAH RICHARDSON	536
THE GWYNNE FAMILY	542
LETTER OF CHARLES SKELTON	543
AN EPISTLE TO THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, BY CHARLES WESLEY	545
AN ELEGY ON THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, BY CHARLES WESLEY	551
ON THE EQUALITY OF PRESBYTERS AND BISHOPS.....	563
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REV. JOHN AND CHARLES WESLEY AND SEVERAL OF THE PREACHERS: WITH AN ENGRAVING...	577
HYMN ON FRIENDSHIP	<i>ib.</i>

THE LIFE
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CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. CHARLES WESLEY was the mother of eight children. It may therefore be supposed that she could not long accompany her husband in those very extensive journeys to which he had been accustomed. His labours indeed became gradually limited, till they were almost exclusively confined to London and Bristol. As it was requisite that he should spend much time in the metropolis, and the family residence was in Bristol, he was often separated from her. During their absence his letters to her were numerous; and they were uniformly characterized by tender affection and fervent piety. Many of them have been preserved; but unhappily scarcely any are fully dated, so that it is impossible to ascertain the time at which they were written. A few selections will show the spirit of the writer to great advantage. They are equally honourable to the man, the husband, and the Minister of Christ.

“The Foundery, May 10th. I had not time the last post to tell my dearest Sally what comfort I had in doing the last office to an old child of mine, who came this week to the grave as a ripe shock of corn. From her grave I hastened to preach our Lord’s ascension; and we shared in his triumph, and rejoiced in hope of receiving all the gifts He has received for us.

“Our meeting of the Leaders was a most solemn assembly.

The Lord is surely teaching us how to worship Him. All perceived, they were met in his name. All were bowed down at his feet. His Spirit made intercession for us, and for you. For one blessed hour our flesh did indeed keep silence before Him.

“This morning I strongly insisted upon selling all, if we would buy the pearl. Mr. Venn breakfasted with me at Mrs. Boulton’s, and comforted my heart by assuring me that Mr. Madan is entirely clear of predestination; that one Mr. Hawes, a Hutchinsonian, preaches in a church, in Oxford, Christ crucified, with amazing success; both townsmen and gownsmen flocking in crowds to hear him.

“I administered the sacrament to one who has been long confined to his restless bed of pain and death; but happy in the midst of all his sufferings, and patiently waiting for the consummation of his bliss.

“My next stage was to brother Hammond’s; a poor wandering sheep, that did run well for years, but left us upon his marriage, and Christ too. The last time I was in town I persuaded him, after twelve years’ interruption, to come to Spitalfields chapel. He came; and the Lord laid hold of him again, and brought him back to the fold. Since then he has constantly attended every ordinance with his old companions; and we have, I trust, received him for ever.

“I met poor Miss Dyer, that was, who has gone through a sea of sorrows since her fatal marriage to Mr. Cayley. Rely and Wheatley confirmed him in his Antinomian principles. He soon acted up to his principles; and discarded his wife with all aggravations of the blackest ingratitude. I took great delight in mourning with her.

“I have been praying with Mrs. Chambers, who draws nearer and nearer her end. She was quite calm, and even desirous to depart. We have often wrestled for her, and cannot doubt.”

“My ever dearest Sally,—Your illness would quite overwhelm me, were I not assured that it shall work together for your good, and enhance your happiness through eternity. How does this assurance change the nature of things!

‘Sorrow is joy, and pain is ease,
If thou, my God, art here!’

The slightest suffering received from Him is an inestimable blessing : another jewel added to your crown. Go on, then, my faithful partner, doing and suffering his blessed will, till out of great tribulation we both enter his kingdom, and his joy, and his glory everlasting.

“I do not doubt your punctually observing your good and wise mother’s advice, both in this and all things : and I rejoice in hope of finding you on Wednesday se’nnight well in all senses.

“Will you allow me to own I envy poor happy Miss L——? if the time of her departure is indeed at hand, Surely she is taken from the evil to come ; and we shall find her again in the New Jerusalem, where is no more death, or curse, or pain, or sighing ; but all tears are wiped away from our eyes.

“Yesterday my brother and I passed with our friends at Shoreham. All inquired after you in the kindest manner ; but Mr. Perronet’s language concerning *his daughter* * would lose much by repetition. They all join with us in the most affectionate salutations. So does Mrs. Blackwell, and Mrs. Dewal, and Grace Murray, and T. Butts, and many more than I have room to mention.”

“My dearest of Friends,—Happy, happy Mr. Parkinson ! I feared he would take his flight before I saw him. Yet I seem to feel he blessed me at his death. Let my last end be like his ! Comfort his poor sister till I come.

“I parted with Miss Bosanquet, Mrs. G——, and Miss Edwards to-day at the Lord’s supper. It was a feast indeed ! We called on our absent friends to be partakers.”

“My dearest Friend,—It is late ; yet I must write to tell you how impatient we all are to see you. The Preachers will guard you to town. Do not refuse even brother Oddie, or brother Oliver. If none of them are ready, brother Sheen, or Mr. Lewis, will, I know, attend you as far as Marlborough. Shall not Isaac meet you at Reading ? on what day ?

“I have preached three times within five days : on Tuesday evening at the Foundery, on looking unto Jesus : afraid I spoke too plain. This evening Mr. Grimshaw preached at Zoar. My strength continues. Thank God for that.

* The name by which this venerable man used to call Mrs. Charles Wesley.

“Bring my account-book. We depend on having you with us next week. The Lord prosper your journey! Adieu!”

“My dear partner will look for me at the heels of my letter. Yesterday I saw Mrs. Bird. At her baptism she was quite overpowered, and struck speechless. Now she tells me, in going home that night such joy sprung up in her heart as she never felt before: ■ joy unspeakable, and full of heaven. It lasted all night. She could have rejoiced to give up her spirit then, knowing she should be saved eternally. Since then she has been frightened at the withdrawing, or, at least, abatement, of her happiness. I told her she must expect temptation, as well as comfort; and our Lord’s own baptism was immediately followed by temptation. She grows in grace. Her husband, a poor backslider, is much stirred up. They earnestly invite you to their house in town or country. Mrs. Hogg joins. She also is awakened by a loud and extraordinary call to prepare for her dissolution.

“Yesterday I visited our loving Miss Hervey, who breathes nothing but love to you. I spent two hours with Mrs. and Mr. Venn. The former stands her ground as yet. I saw Miss Chambers and Mr. Downing; drank tea at Vauxhall, with Mrs. Kiteley; got two hours’ useful conversation with our friends at Lewisham; and, returning, found at my lodgings faithful John Downes. I have already seen cause for rejoicing in my longer continuance here.”

“London, Easter-eve. May the choicest blessings of God go along with these lines, and meet you well at Ludlow! On Friday I trust He will grant me my heart’s desire, even the sight of one I love next to Himself. I am apt to believe you left our happy friend waiting still for the consummation of her happiness. She may hover some time at the gate of paradise. I cannot oppose ‘her wish, for nurse and you to go with her,’ if I might make the third. But my best-beloved friend has many happy days yet to employ in that service which is perfect freedom.

“O what great troubles has He showed you! and yet did He turn and refresh you; yea, and brought you up from the depth again! He will also bring you to great honour, and comfort you on every side. And if He makes me an instrument, I cannot but be comforted myself.

“ My strength is as my day. George Whitefield has taken off great part of my labour. I let him preach yesterday at the chapel, Seven-Dials, reserving myself for the watch-night. In consideration whereof we had service this morning an hour later. These things I mention in proof of my great carefulness, and in hope you will follow a good example.

“ My ‘ sure-footed mare ’ gave me no fall, notwithstanding your malicious supposition. You would do well, instead of affronting her, to find a better : but that I neither expect nor desire. Only I would exchange her for one or two good chaise-horses.

“ You will remember the travellers on Wednesday ; and look for no more news from me till you see me. The Lord be your happiness always ! ”

“ The Foundery. My most beloved Friend,—Our last Lord’s day deserves to be had in remembrance. I read the whole service, except the first lesson ; preached near an hour, and never with greater enlargement. After the sacrament we could have prayed for ever. The Spirit rested upon us ; and it seemed as if every soul was a watered garden.

“ Although the number of communicants was so great, I dismissed them at one ; laid hold on Miss Wells, and carried her to dine with me at sister Phips’s ; and then to sister Boulton’s, and the Foundery. There again my mouth was opened, to warn, and to encourage. My subject was, ‘ If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land ; but if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured by the sword : for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.’ In the society I was unexpectedly *required* to pray for Mr. Lindsey, for Mr. Waller, and for a friend in Bristol, and her two children. Those prayers were *given*, and therefore *sealed*, prayers. We continued in fellowship and in prayers till eight. Then I was less weary than in the morning.

“ The pain in my face, which began to revisit me on Saturday, was carried off this night. I rose with it on Monday morning ; yet it did not hinder my expounding the forty-sixth Psalm, and meeting the select band. I rode over to Low-Leyton, and spent an agreeable day with loving Lady Piers, and courteous Mr. Howard, both of them full of kind inquiries concerning you and your family. In the evening I met on the road my friend Mr. Lloyd, and rode another hour

with him. I received strength to preach this morning at the Foundery; and the Lord of hosts was with us. Mr. Phené took his last leave of me, full of gratitude, both to me, and our children; who, out of their little, have contributed sixty pounds for the relief of their distressed brethren in Germany: besides five guineas for himself. The Lord Jesus be your portion, and bless you and yours for ever! Adieu!”

“Frith-street, near Seven-Dials, April 16th. My very dear Friend,—We go on well. I administered the sacrament yesterday morning at five in Spitalfields, and here at nine. The Lord was comfortably with us. A third time I preached to a vast congregation at the Foundery, and bestowed an hour or two on the whole society. They are in no manner of danger of loving me too little. We had a blessed time of it, which so renewed my bodily strength, that I walked on harts’ feet to Mr. I’anson’s: he, his wife, and a troop accompanying us. Many kind inquiries, be sure, there were after you and your family. I preached at five this morning, and had a good number of communicants. Brother Wright and his sister salute you. Him I shall probably bring with me to Bath; but more probably Robert Windsor. On this day three weeks we purpose taking horse, not without hopes of meeting you at Bath. My stay at Bristol will be very short; yet my stay may be longer at Brecknock. But observe! we come and go together: therefore give our friends no expectation of my leaving you behind me. Look you to nurse Sennick: as much air and sunshine as you please; but not a grain of salt, or a bit of meat, for Jackey.

“I have met Lady Piers at my host’s. She bids me say to you, in her name, everything that is kind. I must break off. The Lord bless you with the Spirit of grace and supplications! Adieu!”

“Seven-Dials, Feb. 15th. My dearest Partner,—Abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Let us trust Him for each other. He never faileth them that seek Him. And whoso putteth his trust in the Lord, mercy embraceth him on every side.

“At one yesterday my host took me in his chariot to Lady Huntingdon’s. Not finding her, we drove on to Major Galatin’s. Here we dined and drank tea. She carried me to the chapel. Mr. Simpson read prayers. I preached, from,

‘And the Spirit and the bride say, Come,’ &c. Great power was with the word. Many cried after Christ, yet not so as to disturb us. I was much refreshed myself.

“I stayed till nine, conversing with Mrs. Galatin and William Perronet. I lodged rather than slept at the chapel-house. An old woman’s hooping-cough made me keep a watch-night against my will.

“I breakfasted this morning with William Wright’s poor widow, and Betty Duchesne. Then I found my friend in New Norfolk-street. Our joy at meeting was equal. We soon got to her Isaac; and my soul was all sympathy.

“On friends deceased full heartily we wept; and prayed too, according to God. Before twelve she carried me to Sir Charles Hotham, just snatched again from the brink of the grave. Young Lady Hotham, and Gertrude, Miss Melly, with Mrs. Cartaret, and Cavendish, joined me in fervent prayer and love. There were many kind inquiries after you, be sure, and after Mrs. Grinfield. We had above an hour of close conversation. I dined at Major Galatin’s; and am now got away to salute my dearest Sally.

“And now let me inquire concerning our son Charles;

‘The last, not least, in love.’

How many more teeth can he show? Can you bear to hear him in the night, and not rise to—help him? no: but to hurt yourself. Can you forbear listening after his cries, or hearing them in your dreams? Mrs. Galatin drank *her* son’s health to-day, and wished it too, and his and his mother’s company. Many are of her mind. I can give them no hopes of seeing you, till, if it please God, you have weaned your next child. In the summer her Ladyship promises you a visit.

“My heart is with you all, and yet in the work here. I trust the Lord sent me hither. Help together by your prayers. Be very particular about yourself. The Lord be your strength and peace! Adieu!”

“Feb. 18th, 19th, Westminster. My dearest Friend,—My strength suffices for my *moderate* work. As I do not expose myself to the night-air, my teeth, head, limbs, are very quiet. I am sorry that poor Mrs. Vigor has been so ill; but hope she has quite lost her pain.

“Mrs. Galatin sends her hearty love. The Major desires to be kindly remembered to you; and again he gives his love. I send his words; which you ought to value, as he never deals in *formal* salutations.

“Yesterday morning my text was, ‘Learn of me.’ The great Prophet was in the midst of us, applying his own word. He is never absent from his supper. Our hearts were warmed with his presence, and drawn out in mighty prayer for our Church and nation, and all mankind.

“Mr. Fletcher read prayers again in the afternoon. I testified, ‘If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.’ Our chapel was crowded, as on the fast-day. Lady Huntingdon, Lady Gertrude, Mrs. Cartaret, and a multitude of strangers attended. I continued my discourse for a whole hour; the Lord being my strength, and giving me utterance.

“In the society we were greatly refreshed and quickened. Mrs. Galatin carried me home, and a very comfortable evening we had together.

“Monday. I breakfasted with our most faithful friend, Lady Huntingdon; dined at the Major’s; whither I returned at night, from preaching on the death of the righteous.

“Tuesday. I called on Mrs. Cartaret, and Cavendish, who have not lost their first love, either for the Master or servants. We prayed, and parted—in body.

“Tuesday night. I dined at Lady Huntingdon’s, with Miss Shirley, and Mr. Jones. The latter I came to talk with; but I only saw him with my eyes. Just before dinner we were alarmed with the chimney being on fire. Lady Huntingdon calmly ordered a wet blanket to be applied close to the chimney, so as quite to exclude the air. It quenched the fire instantaneously.

“After dinner Lord Huntingdon came, and I went. The Lord bless my dearest Sally and Charles! Adieu!”

“July 3d, Moorfields. Last Wednesday Miss Gideon carried me to preach at Welling. It was a day comparatively well spent.

“Thursday, June 28th. I called to see sister Pearson, speechless and expiring. At the name of Jesus she recovered her speech and senses. I asked, ‘Are you afraid to die?’ ‘O no,’ she answered; ‘I have no fear; death has no sting; Jesus is all in all.’

How did I even contend to lay
 My limbs upon that bed !
 I ask'd the angels to convey
 My spirit in her stead."

" June 3d. From conferring with our Preachers, I took my progress to Betsy, Mrs. Cartaret, Miss Gumley, Mr. Romaine, and brother Butcher. I found the greatest blessing at the last house—of God.

" Sunday, July 1st. My morning subject was, ' Ye have sold yourselves for nought ; and ye shall be redeemed without money.' He convinced our hearts that thus saith the Lord. I prayed at the table for poor, happy, dying J. Matthews.

" I met near two thousand of the society at the Foundery, and rejoiced as in the months that are past, when the candle of the Lord was upon our head.

" Monday. I passed two useful hours at Miss Bosanquet's. Eight orphans she has taken to train up for God. I dined at brother Hammond's, and walked with Peggy Jackson and Nancy to a poor backslider, rejoicing, and triumphing over death and hell. I picked up a stray sheep, and delivered him into the hands of his old Leader, brother Parkinson. I walked home, near three miles. Adieu ! "

" Friday night, London. Can I *threaten* my bosom friend with any evil ? No ; but I sometimes mind her of that blessed day when we shall put off these tabernacles. But I do not think we shall be long divided. Yet, if it gives you pain, I shall endeavour to forbear.

" Has our dear Molly got the start of us both ? I expect the next post will bring me news of her triumphant departure. If she is yet in the body, tell her my spirit is with her spirit, never to be divided. If she has taken her flight,—in a few moments we shall overtake her.

" On Wednesday afternoon our cousin Betty was to visit me at the chapel. I called first on her, and found her confined to her bed by a fever. We had much close talk : when I asked her why she hoped to be saved. She gave me the usual answer : ' Because I never committed any *great* sin ; and because I have *done* my best,' &c. I soon beat her out of her plea, and showed her the true way of salvation. She made very little opposition, and seemed desirous to know

Jesus Christ. Yesterday I saw her again, and left her a guinea. I have wrote to her mother, and to ours. Mrs. Dudley, I hope, will be able to get her a place, if she recovers ; which is most probable. She must make me amends for the short loss of her sister.

“ I fear you are in great trouble, from the extraordinary depression I have felt all this day. Surely you have cause of rejoicing in our happy friend.

‘ For can we mourn to see
Our fellow-prisoner free ? ’

If she *is* in Abraham’s bosom, she is there as our fore-runner. The Lord prepare my better soul, and me, for our translation ! then farewell sin and pain. Then all our soul shall be love, and all our business praise ! ”

“ July 25th, Knightsbridge. My beloved Friend,—Yesterday I dined with Miss Darby and Billy Ley. Ask Mr. Brown, Mr. Rouquet, or whom else you meet, if they can get him a curacy at or near Bristol.

“ I walked with him to the Lock, where Mr. Madan sincerely desired and pressed me to preach ; but in vain. If I cannot do the poor rich people good, I would not hinder him from doing it. I attended an hour to the singers ; and heard Mr. Madan for another hour or more, on searching the Scriptures. His chapel is always crowded, and many souls will doubtless be saved through his ministry. He showed me a young woman, lately acquitted of murdering her child, though the fact was undeniable. She seems now under deep convictions.

“ I got a good deal of rest last night ; breakfasted this morning with Mrs. Gumley, who made me an offer of Drayton living, in Oxfordshire, the drunken Incumbent being near death. I neither refused nor accepted it ; for I had not consulted you.

“ I dined at Mrs. Gideon’s. We spent half an hour before dinner in the best way. She is setting out for Bright-helmstone, weak in body, as weak can be, but strong in faith working by love. The Gospel Ministers have thrown away upon her much pains, to alienate her from my brother and me. She is too humble to imbibe their envious spirit.

“ Sunday afternoon. I preached in the morning on, ‘ I

will bring the third part through the fire ;' and many rejoiced for the consolation. We had a vast number of communicants ; and the Spirit of supplications was abundantly poured out."

" London, August 17th. I often reflect on that hard saying, ' Son of man, behold, I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke ;' and ask myself, ' Could I bear Ezekiel's trial ?' Whether I shall ever be called to it, God knoweth ; for known unto Him are all his works. But it is far more probable that my beloved Sally will see many days in the vale after my warfare is accomplished, and my weary soul at rest. Here indeed we have laid the foundation of an eternal friendship, and hasten to our consummation in bliss above. Till then we scarcely begin to know the end of our meeting upon earth. O that we may fully answer it, by helping each other on to heaven, and by bringing very many with us to glory !

" God, I humbly hope, will hear my prayers, and give me to find you well on Wednesday. On this day se'nnight, at twelve, I have appointed to preach at Leominster. Please to send them notice, if opportunity serves. I fully designed to bring Salthouse with me ; but he cannot leave the books at this time, without great loss, and disappointment of my subscribers. But be not frightened, as if I should come alone. Mr. Waller guards me the first day's journey ; and some friends from Worcester I expect to meet me at Evesham. Besides, and above all, you know the ministering spirits will wait upon me, if you ask their Master to send them.

" From Ludlow to Bristol, I presume you will spare us Harry, or some other ; and I depend upon *our* sister's company, according to promise. I must be in Bristol the last day of this month. Observe, I give you legal notice, that you may order your matters accordingly. My heart is with you, and your dear worthy parents and relations. Blessed be God, that they are *mine* also. O that we all may be joined to the Lord in one spirit with Him !

" My brother is deeply engaged with his classes. God owns and blesses him much. Last Sunday was a time of great refreshing. Many here inquire after you out of true affection, and bewail your settling in Bristol.

" Thursday afternoon. Yours of August 13th has just now brought me the mournful news of your increasing illness.

Yet would I say, ‘It is the Lord; let Him do as seemeth Him good.’ Still my hope of you is steadfast, that hereby you shall be partaker of his holiness, who in kindest love chastens you for your good. And you may be bold to say, ‘When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.’

“Thursday night. I am just returned from Lewisham, where Mrs. Dewal joined us in a hymn for you, and sends her kindest love. On Monday she and Mrs. Blackwell travel to Oxford: so I am in no danger of wanting company so far.

“How has God dealt with poor dear Mrs. L——? I shall think it long till you inform me. Neither can I let go my hope of seeing you better, if not quite recovered, on Wednesday. It would break my heart to leave you behind me, even at Ludlow, while compelled to Bristol myself. I hope to reach the Hundred-House by ten on Wednesday; and do not despair of meeting there some kind guides to Ludlow. Part of a hymn I send, without time to finish it.

See, gracious Lord, with pitying eyes,
Low at thy feet a sufferer lies,
Thy fatherly chastisement proves;
And sick she is whom Jesus loves!

Thy angels plant around her bed,
And let thy hand support her head;
Thy power her pain to joy convert,
Thy love revive her drooping heart.

Thy love her soul and body heal;
And let her every moment feel
The’ atoning blood by faith applied,
The balm that drops from Jesu’s side.

“My time is out. Farewell, and a thousand times farewell in the Lord, thy peace, thy strength, thy life eternal!”

These selections from the private letters which were addressed by Mr. Charles Wesley to his wife, through a series of years, demonstrate the strength and tenderness of his affection as a husband and a father, and his ceaseless solicitude for her spiritual welfare. He is perpetually reminding her of the great end for which life was given; of the nearness of eternity; and of her privilege, by supplication, and a mighty faith in Christ, to hold uninterrupted communion with God, and partake of the divine nature. To the

providence and grace of God, as the grand and only means of comfort and salvation, he is constantly directing her attention.

His social and pastoral habits are also here strongly exhibited. He had an extensive circle of friends, by whom he was tenderly beloved. With them and their families he sympathized in all the joys and afflictions of life. When they were in sickness and sorrow he visited them, for the purpose of encouragement and prayer; and he brought their respective cases before the Lord, in the assemblies of his people, especially upon sacramental occasions, when they were commended to the divine mercy by the united intercessions of the brotherhood. The society in London was numerous, and deaths among the members were frequent. The calm and triumphant manner in which he often saw his spiritual children, and those of his brother, die in the Lord, filled him with humility, thankfulness, and solemn joy; and his earnest hope of future glory led him to desire immediately to follow them to the heavenly paradise. Lady Huntingdon opened her house in London for divine worship, and the ministry of Christ's Gospel. Here Mr. Whitefield and other eminent Ministers held forth the word of life, and were heard by several of the nobility and gentry, who cultivated a taste for spiritual religion. In these holy exercises Mr. Charles Wesley occasionally took part, and was equally esteemed and beloved by those who had an opportunity of attending his ministrations. His intercourse with persons of rank, who sought his acquaintance for the purpose of religious edification, was frequent; but never abused. He asked for no worldly preferment. He "coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel." He affected not the delicacies of rich men's tables. He lowered not the dignity of the ministerial character, by flattering the great, conniving at their vices, softening the truth of God, or assuming an effeminacy of manners. There was in him a simplicity, a generous frankness, and a warmth of affection, which endeared him to all who were able to appreciate moral worth.

His official services in London were numerous. His labours were divided among four principal chapels, besides subordinate places of worship, and occasional services, of which he was not sparing. He regularly preached in the

Foundery ; in the West-street chapel, Seven-Dials ; in the Snowsfields chapel, Southwark ; and in that which the French Protestants had formerly occupied at Spitalfields, but had now vacated for a larger in the same neighbourhood. In one or other of these chapels he appears, when in London, to have administered the Lord's supper every Sabbath-day ; and sometimes in two of them, beginning one of these sacred services at the early hour of five o'clock in the morning. He and the society were exemplary in their attendance upon this ordinance ; and they generally found it to be accompanied by an especial blessing. In the administration of this sacrament, as well as in that of baptism, he always used the form contained in the Book of Common Prayer ; but he did not confine himself to it. He was often drawn out largely in extemporary prayer. His "Hymns for the Lord's Supper," accompanied by an extract from Dr. Brevint's treatise, and from Thomas à Kempis, were freely used by the society. Thus employed, he was blessed, and made a blessing. The anointing of the Holy One rested upon him in sensible and rich effusions ; for he was happy and useful ; people crowded in great numbers to hear him ; and the members of the society walked in faith and love. Between his doctrine and his practice there was a beautiful harmony. Speaking of Jesus, "the great Shepherd of the sheep," the Evangelist says, "In the day time He was teaching in the temple ; and at night He went out, and abode in the mount that is called the Mount of Olives. And all the people came early in the morning to Him in the temple, for to hear Him." (Luke xxi. 37, 38.) From these words Mr. Charles Wesley takes occasion to sing,—

The servant of the Lord,
 Who Jesu's charge receives,
 A faithful steward of the word,
 A wrestling Jacob, lives.
 God and the multitude
 His sacred labours share,
 His day is spent in active good,
 His night in fervent prayer.

Before the rising morn
 He comes his flock to feed ;
 His flock with hungry hearts return,
 And seek their daily bread.

· Their love and earnestness
The Pastor's zeal improve ;
The Pastor's zeal doth more increase
Their earnestness and love.

It will be observed, that among his personal friends, with whom he was accustomed in those times to meet by appointment, were Mr. and Mrs. Venn, whom he has also mentioned with respect in others of his letters. This excellent Clergyman, who was afterwards successively Vicar of Huddersfield and of Yelling, now held the curacy of Clapham, and the lectureship of two or three churches in London. His wife was the daughter of Dr. Bishop, of Ipswich, who preached the Lady Moyer Lectures in 1724–25 : a Divine of considerable attainments. The son and grandson of Mr. Venn, who have written his Life, seem very anxious to sever him, in the public estimation, from all connexion with the Methodists in the early periods of his religious career.

The grandson, speaking of Mr. Venn, and of his contemporaries among the evangelical Clergy, says, “ I apprehend it may be shown, that, for the most part, these men derived their views of the truth directly from the word of God ; that their labours were chiefly devoted to the revival of true religion in the Church ; and that those labours were, under God, the main cause of the revival which followed.

“ I am aware that a different view of the case is often given ; and that the labours of Mr. Whitefield and the Wesleys are regarded not only as the means of the revival of religion among persons connected with their societies, but also of that which took place among the Clergy. A preface, and more especially a preface to a somewhat bulky volume, is not the place for entering at large into a question which may be controverted ; but I may be permitted, perhaps, to point out how far the present volume seems to support the view of this question which I have ventured to suggest.

“ The case of Mr. Venn himself is clearly stated in the Memoir, in these words :—‘ This change of his sentiments was not to be ascribed to an intercourse with others : it was the steady progress of his mind, in consequence of a faithful and diligent application to the holy Scriptures, unbiassed by an attachment to human systems. It was not till some years afterwards, that he became acquainted with any of those

Preachers who are usually known by the name of evangelical; that is, in conformity with the motives and hopes held out to us in the Gospel of Christ.' " *

It is added, with reference to the same subject, "As far as we can trace the operation of human agency, it seems to me, that the effects of the labours of the Wesleys, and their immediate co-adjutors, were chiefly manifest in the extension of Methodism; as the effects of the evangelical Clergy were in the improved tone of religion in the established Church: that there were thus two kindred, but separate and independent, streams of light, penetrating the gloom which brooded over the Christian community. That which flowed in the channel of Methodism burst forth, indeed, in a more resplendent and sudden blaze: the other proceeded by a more gradual and quiet, but progressive, course." †

All this doubtless appears plausible and satisfactory to a Churchman, who deprecates every deviation from his own ecclesiastical order; but it is merely a matter of theory and opinion, which we believe no man ever did or can prove. No revival of religion appeared in the national Church, until some years after the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield entered upon their bold and irregular course: and certainly the means which they employed to rouse a slumbering Church and people were no secret. This thing was not done in a corner. Preaching in fields and market-places, as well as in private houses, barns, and churches, and travelling through the length and breadth of the land, they caused their voices to be everywhere heard, and *forced* religion upon the attention of all classes of the community. Their doctrines, proceedings, and character, therefore, became subjects of general inquiry and discussion. The very fact, that gentlemen of education and talent voluntarily exposed themselves to the violence of mobs, and stood forth under the summer's sun, and the winter's snow, calling the outcasts of mankind to repentance, was in itself calculated to make a deep impression upon every thoughtful mind. At the same time these apostolic men widely dispersed tracts, pamphlets, and books, of various sizes, in prose and verse, explaining the nature of Christian godliness, recommending it as the one thing needful,

* Preface to the Life of the Rev. Henry Venn.

† Ibid.

and enforcing the universal necessity of repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. How far the excellent Clergymen who were raised up to revive religion more immediately in the Church were influenced by these means, in the beginning of their religious inquiries and convictions, perhaps they themselves were not able, in every instance, to ascertain. Most of them, however, in the progress of their course, were brought into direct personal intercourse with the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield, and were enlightened, animated, and encouraged by the conversation, ministry, and example of these men of God.

So far as Mr. Venn is concerned, the case is clear. He became deeply serious about the time of his ordination in 1747; a period at which Mr. Whitefield and the Wesleys had been distributing their writings, and preaching in all directions, for several years, and had succeeded in making a deep impression upon the public mind. Mr. Venn was born in London, and partly educated there, and the neighbourhood, and partly in Bristol; and these cities are well known to have been the principal scenes of Methodistical labour and excitement in those times. He must have been both blind and deaf, neither to have seen nor heard anything of the men who, in his immediate vicinity, were actually "turning the world upside down." For some time after his ordination, Mr. Venn's views of evangelical truth were very defective; yet, as he addicted himself to prayer, fasting, and the study of the Bible, his light increased, and he saw more distinctly the way of salvation through the great and only atonement. In 1754 he accepted the curacy of Clapham, and obtained his London lectureships; in 1757 he married Miss Bishop; and in 1759 he was appointed to the vicarage of Huddersfield. When resident in London he had frequent intercourse with John and Charles Wesley; as is manifest from various notices in John's Journal, and other writings,* and from Charles's letters: and it is acknowledged by the biographers of Mr. Venn that, during this period, his knowledge of divine things, and his personal piety, were greatly improved. They say, "In

* In a letter addressed by Mr. John Wesley to Mr. Blackwell, and dated, Bandon, July 12th, 1758, it is said, "You people in England are bad correspondents. Both Mr. Downing, MR. VENN, and Mr. Madan, are a letter in my debt."—Wesley's Works, vol. xii., p. 171. Third edit.

1756 he laboured under a severe illness, which incapacitated him for duty, for more than eight months. This, however, was a most important season to him. He had time to reflect upon his principles and his conduct; and he used to observe, that, *after that period, he was no longer able to preach the sermons which he had previously composed.* His views of eternal things had now become clearer; his meditations on the attributes of God more profound; his views of the greatness of the salvation of Christ more distinct; *and the whole of his religion had received that tincture of more elevated devotion, which rendered his conversation and preaching doubly instructive.*" *

The endeavour to prove that Mr. Venn acquired and maintained his enlightened and effective piety, independently of Methodistical influence, is therefore a hopeless task. Nor is the attempt itself to be commended. Whatever spiritual good exists in any man, he has received it from the God of all grace, who, in the exercise of his sovereign wisdom and mercy, selects and employs what instrumentality He pleases in the accomplishment of his own designs; nor have any of his creatures a right to say to Him, "What doest thou?" The fact is undeniable, that John and Charles Wesley were the personal friends of Mr. Venn, when this justly-celebrated Clergyman obtained his best and highest qualifications for the sacred office. Charles was also a spiritual adviser of Mr. Venn's amiable and intelligent wife, at the commencement of her pious course. If they were both benefited by the counsel, prayers, and spirit of the brothers, neither their posterity, nor the members of the Church to which they belonged, have any reason to be ashamed. But whether they are or not, the case is not altered. The biographers of Mr. Venn may "wash him with nitre, and take much sope," yet they will never be able to remove from his character and memory the glorious reproach of Methodism.

Though the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield were still unable to think alike concerning the five perplexing points at issue between the disciples of Calvin and Arminius; and it was requisite, on this account, that they should pursue an independent course; yet they still remained one in heart; and in

* Life of Venn, p. 24. Sixth edition.

this respect set before the world an edifying example of Christian forbearance. Up to the year 1753, Mr. Whitefield and his people worshipped in their wooden Tabernacle, near Moorfields; but at this period they united to form a more substantial and commodious erection upon the same site. While this work was in progress the Wesleys favoured them with the use of the Foundery. This seasonable kindness Mr. Whitefield acknowledges in the following characteristic letter to Mr. Charles Wesley, which he evidently wrote in the fullness of his grateful and generous heart:—

“London, March 3d, 1753. My dear Friend,—I thank you and your brother, most heartily, for the loan of the chapel. The favour shall be returned, if ever you have the like occasion to borrow. Blessed be God, the work goes on well. On Thursday morning the first brick was laid, with a sweet solemnity. I preached from Exodus xx., and the latter part of the 24th verse. Afterwards we sung, and prayed for God’s blessing upon ‘all places where’ his glorious ‘name is recorded.’ The wall is now about a yard high. The building is to be eighty foot square. It is upon the old spot. We have purchased the house; and, if we finish what we have begun, shall be rent-free for forty-six years. We have above £1,100 in hand. This, I think, is the best way to build. Mr. Steward’s death so affected me, that, when I met the workmen that night, to contract about the building, I could scarce bear to think of building tabernacles.

“Strange that so many should be so soon discharged, and we continued! Eighteen years have I been waiting for the coming of the Son of God: but I find we are immortal till our work is done. O that we may never live to be ministered unto, but to minister! Mr. Steward spoke for his Lord as long as he could speak at all. He had no clouds, or darkness. I was with him till a few minutes before he slept in Jesus. I have good news from several parts. A door is opening at Winchester. Surely the little leaven will ferment, till the whole kingdom be leavened. Even so, Lord Jesus. Amen! Pray, how does our elect Lady? I hope to write to her Ladyship next post.

“My poor wife hath had another plunge. We thought she was taken with a palsy; but, blessed be God, she is now recovering. Our joint love attends you, and yours, and your

brother, and his household. That you all may increase with all the increase of God, is the earnest prayer of, my dear friend,

“Yours most affectionately in our common Lord.”

In the loss of his friends by death Mr. Whitefield suffered only a common lot. The Wesleys drank largely of the same bitter cup. On the 10th of August this year Mr. John Meriton closed his earthly career. It will be recollected, that this Clergyman was a member of the first Methodist Conference; he travelled extensively as a Minister of the truth; and meekly bore his share of the reproach and violence which were awarded to all those faithful men who attempted to awaken and convert a slumbering and guilty people. Where he died we are not informed; and the only particulars respecting his end that have been preserved are to be gathered from the following hymn, which Mr. Charles Wesley wrote on the occasion. Having finished his sufferings and his work, this good man slept in Jesus.

And hath he bow'd his head,
And render'd up the ghost?
So *quietly* escaped, and fled
To that immortal host?
With them our songs we join,
And solemnly proclaim
The victory of love divine,
The triumph of the Lamb.

The Lamb of God alone
Supplied his Spirit's might,
Through which our fellow-soldier won
The good, though doubtful, fight;
Through which the' *afflicted man*,
On sovereign mercy cast,
Rode out the storm of sin and pain,
And landed safe at last.

Long was he toss'd below
On life's tempestuous sea,
Born to a double share of woe,
And weight of misery;
Tortured by cruel fears,
By flattering hopes deceived,
He wander'd through the vale of tears,
And rather died than lived.

The soul is now at rest,
 The exile roams no more,
 Of his inheritance possess'd
 On that celestial shore :
 A lot that cannot fade,
 A life that cannot die,
 A house by hands immortal made,
 A mansion in the sky.

Jesus, take all the praise,
 The praise is all thy due ;
 And save *us* by the word of grace,
 And make us conquerors too :
 The word thy servant spoke,
 And found its saving power,
 Let us believe, obey,—and look
 For death's triumphant hour.

O that we then, like him,
 Might quietly resign
 The souls thou suffer'dst to redeem,
 Into those hands of thine !
 O that we then might prove,
 Like him, the crowning grace,
 And join our glittering friends above
 In everlasting lays !

It appears to have been in the autumn of the year 1753, that Mr. Charles Wesley paid his last visit to Cornwall, leaving his wife in Bristol, with his only child, a son about twelve months old. All the information that we have concerning this journey is contained in the two subjoined letters, addressed to his wife, and a fragment of a third, in which he says that he was going to see the Land's End. The letters breathe his usual spirit of zeal and enterprise, and intimate that the work of God was in a state of encouraging progress.

“ Redruth, Oct. 4th. Here am I—mourning under my disappointment. I comforted myself all the way with assured hopes of a letter waiting here to welcome a poor traveller. But my beloved Sally has missed an opportunity of comforting me. Yet I will not forbear writing, in the midst of my best business, to one whom my soul loves, whose perfection I long for, whom I trust to meet at the marriage of the Lamb.

“ It would have done you good to have been with us at St.

Mewan's, on Monday evening, while the great congregation felt

‘The’ overwhelming power of saving grace.’

Next morning we were in like manner refreshed at St. Ewe. Last night at Penrhyn our hearts were comforted with our Lord's presence. I find my way prepared in every place, and want nothing but you to be a partaker of our joy.

“A dear friend of ours brought up an evil report of this land. It flows with milk and honey. I scarce believe it to be Cornwall, the accommodations everywhere are so good, and the people so cleanly: not a whit inferior to those in the north. Very many loving friends of yours, whom you never saw, inquire after you. By and by I shall allure you hither, especially if Becky will bear you company. This day se'n-night I expect to revisit this place. If I do not first hear from you, I question whether I shall have the heart to write again before my return to Bristol. You may suppose me something eager to know what is become of our son and heir, our sister, friends in Garth, London, Bristol, &c. What are you about? How do you go on in your family? whether my brother is come? whom have you heard at the room? what visits have you made, or received? and, above all, how your own soul prospers? and what benefit you reap from daily retirement?

“John Trembath cleaves to me. He sends his love. Give mine to dearest Beck, &c. Remember me in all your prayers. I am in my calling, quite contented, and cheerfully labouring in the vineyard. May the peace and love of God spring up in your hearts, and keep them always! Farewell.

“Wednesday night. I am come from preaching to a most attentive multitude. This place seems quite subdued to our Lord. Their hearts are all bowed before Him. He gives me uncommon strength. A very great door is opened. The poor people have got in their harvest, and are now at leisure to be gathered in themselves. The heavens smile upon us, and the weather seems made on purpose for preaching. I generally begin a quarter before six, and continue till past seven. It is now past nine, my hour of rest. The everlasting arms be underneath you! Adieu.”

“Gwennap, Oct. 11th. My very dear Sally,—I bless God

in your behalf, that you are better in body, and *more* languishing for spiritual health. Pray that my coming may be a furtherance, not hinderance, to this.

“ My bodily strength increases, the more I use it for my Lord. Every day brings its blessing, both to me, and to those that hear me. It is pleasant travelling with such an errand. Nothing but the company of my true yokefellow could make it pleasanter.

“ The *next* time you hinder me in my work will be the first time. But we may learn even from our enemies what to guard against. The more heartily I labour in the vineyard, the longer I shall continue with you.

“ Let us join with greater earnestness than ever to seek the kingdom of God together. And let our dearest Beck make up the three-fold cord.

“ You do not consider, I lodge most nights in little towns, where is no post. It is much I can write so often.

“ We must shut up our doors at five o’clock, if we can no otherwise get retirement. But most of our friends would favour our retreat from them at that hour. If resolution be not wanting on our part, we shall find the custom as practicable as my father did for forty years.

“ I am creeping towards you, and rejoice to be thirty miles nearer than on Sunday. If nothing extraordinary retard me, I hope to see you,—let me see,—whenabouts will it be?—about Tuesday, Oct. 24th, N.S.; or, at the farthest, some time the week after next. Direct, after receiving this, to Tiverton.

“ I wish my horse may escape the staggers. Many horses about us fall down dead in a moment. But thou, Lord, shalt save both man and beast.

“ Remember me at family prayers, and in private. I am afraid of myself, that, when I return, I shall cumber the ground as heretofore. Preaching once a week in the country might be a means of preventing it: but nothing will do without private prayer.

“ Pray me a successful journey. The Lord bless you and yours, and keep us to our happiest meeting around his throne ! ”

The reference to five o’clock, as the hour of secret devotion, is not the least interesting part of this letter. I would seem

that Mrs. Wesley had complained that her intercourse with the Lord at this sacred time had been interrupted by visitants; and her husband intimates, that if they could not otherwise secure their hour of private prayer, they must fasten the door of the house. The Rector of Epworth, it is here stated, employed this part of the day in secret converse with God for the long space of forty years. His example in this was followed by his two sons.

The friendship which subsisted between Mr. John and Charles Wesley was very tender and confidential. It was also marked by Christian fidelity. They entertained precisely the same views concerning the nature and importance of true religion, and the manner of its attainment. Yet their characters were very dissimilar. Charles was the child of feeling and emotion; and John of intellect, who demanded a reason for everything. This difference of temperament occasioned in some instances a diversity in their courses of action; and they did not hesitate to tell each other what they deemed erroneous or reprehensible in their conduct. After John's marriage their personal intercourse was for some years less frequent than it had formerly been; his wife cherishing towards her brother- and sister-in-law feelings of strong dislike, which she was seldom backward to express. Her invectives were more empassioned than welcome, and served to keep apart those whose hearts were one, and who lived and laboured for the same object.

Towards the close of the year 1753 Mr. John Wesley deemed it his duty to address his brother in the language of reproof and caution, but without any approach to anger or unkindness. Under the date of Oct. 20th he says, "I came back from Bedford last night. I know not whether it was your will or no (I believe not); but I am sure it was God's will, for you to call there. How do you judge whether a thing be God's will or no? I hope not by inward impressions. Let us walk warily. I have much constitutional enthusiasm; and you have much more.

"I give you a dilemma. Take one side, or the other. Either act really in connexion with me, or never pretend to it. Rather disclaim it, and openly avow you do not, and will not. By acting in connexion with me, I mean, take counsel with me once or twice a year, as to the places where you will

labour. Hear my advice before you fix, whether you take it or no. At present you are so far from this, that I do not even know when and where you intend to go : so far are you from following any advice of mine ; nay, even from asking it. And yet I may say, without vanity, that I am a better judge in this matter than either Lady Huntingdon, Sally, Jones, or any other ; nay, than your own heart ; that is, will. I wish you all peace, zeal, and love."

On the 31st of the same month he wrote again, pressing the necessity of acting by united counsels. He concludes by saying, "Why do you omit giving the sacrament in Kingswood ? What is reading prayers at Bristol, in comparison of this ? I am sure, in making this vehement alteration you never consulted with me."

When these letters were written Mr. John Wesley was in a declining state of health. He thought, indeed, when he wrote the last of them, that the disease was subdued, and he was convalescent. "My fever intermitted," says he, "after twelve hours. After a second fit, of about fourteen hours, I began taking the bark, and am now recovering my strength." In this, however, he was mistaken. The complaint returned with greater violence, and, in a few weeks, it was generally thought that his case was hopeless. He continued, with his wonted zeal, to preach, administer the Lord's supper, and meet classes, under great personal suffering and weakness, till the 26th of November, when Dr. Fothergill, the celebrated Quaker Physician who attended him, declared that he could not remain in London another day, but at the certain hazard of his life. "If anything does thee good," said the Doctor, "it must be the country air, with rest, asses' milk, and riding daily." His symptoms were those of confirmed consumption : a severe cough, pain in the breast, fever, with the loss of strength. Not being able to sit upon his horse, he was conveyed in a coach to the house of his faithful friends, Mr. and Mrs. Blackwell, of Lewisham, where he found every accommodation that his circumstances required.

In the mean while the news of his danger spread, and caused a deep and general sympathy. Charles was in Bristol when the distressing intelligence was communicated to him. He was the less prepared for it, because of the impression which he had received from recent letters, that his

brother was decidedly improved in his health. A valuable fragment of his journal, which he wrote at the time, will give the best view of his feelings, of his brother's condition, and of the excitement which was produced by this unexpected visitation of divine Providence. On his way to London, and during his stay there, it will be observed, his trouble was increased by the company and care of Mr. Hutchinson, a friend of the family, who was suffering both from bodily disease, and mental aberration.

"Nov. 29th, 1753. Between nine and ten," says he, "Lady Huntingdon surprised us by bringing Mrs. Galatin to see us. She had met with her at Bath, and conducted her to our house, with the mournful news of my brother's danger. I concluded, from several letters last received, and mentioning his recovery, and design of officiating at the chapel, that he was out of all danger; but Mrs. Galatin assured us, she thought he would have expired at the altar last Sunday.

"Mr. Sims, a Clergyman, followed Lady Huntingdon, full of his first love. We joined in the Lord's supper, and found much power to pray, particularly for my brother.

"At two, as Mr. Hutchinson and I were setting out, we were met by a letter from Mr. Briggs, informing me that I must make haste, if I would see my brother alive. This made us all renew our entreaties to Mr. Hutchinson, not to accompany me, lest he should retard me in my journey. But he would not be dissuaded, resolving, if I left him, to follow me in a post-chaise. I was therefore forced to take him, sorely against my will, in a chaise to Bath. We got to Mrs. Naylor's with the night. He could not sleep for cold. Nov. 30th, we prayed with great earnestness for my brother. My heart was melted into warm desires of his recovery. Between seven and eight we set forward, in a post-chaise, and came safe to Newbury before night.

"Saturday, Dec. 1st. My companion was strengthened to set out again before seven. Soon after seven we were brought safe to Mrs. Boulton's. She had no expectation of us, and was therefore quite unprepared. I had no other place to lodge my poor friend, than the noisy Foundery. He had not more sleep than I expected."

On his arrival at the Foundery, Mr. Charles Wesley addressed the following hasty letter to his wife. From Bath

he had sent her a short note, requesting her to hold herself in readiness to follow him to London, should this be necessary.

“My dearest Sally,—God has conducted us hither, through an easy, prosperous journey. My companion is better for it, not worse. But, first, you expect news of my brother. He is at Lewisham, considerably better: yet still in imminent danger, being far gone, and very suddenly, in a consumption. I cannot acquit my friends of unpardonable negligence, since not one of them sent me word of his condition, but left me to hear it by chance. I hasten to him to-morrow morning, when I have stationed my patient at Mrs. Boulton’s. To-night he lodges in the green-room; I in sister Aspern’s.

“Send this immediately to sister Jones, and bid her see to it, that Wick be not neglected on Monday night. I passed my word, that I or John Jones should preach there. Frank Walker, or whoever supplies our place, must inform them that we hasten to see my brother before he dies.

“If my brother recovers, his life will be given to our prayers. Pray always, and faint not.”

“Sunday, Dec. 2d. The first news I heard last night in Moorfields was, that my brother was something better. I rode at nine to Lewisham; found him with my sister, and Mrs. Blackwell, and Dewal. I fell on his neck, and wept. All present were alike affected. Last Wednesday he changed for the better, while the people were praying for him at the Foundery. He has rested well ever since; his cough is abated, and his strength increased: yet it is most probable, he will not recover, being far gone in a galloping consumption; just as my elder brother was at his age.

“I followed him to his chamber, with my sister, and prayed with strong desire, and a good hope of his recovery. All last Tuesday they expected his death every hour. He expected the same, and wrote his own epitaph. ‘Here lieth the body of John Wesley, a brand, not once only* plucked out of the fire. He died of a consumption, in the fifty-first year of his age; leaving, after his debts were paid, not ten

* Mr. Wesley, after his recovery, inserted this epitaph in his printed Journal, leaving out the clause, “not once only,” which contains an allusion to his almost miraculous escape from the parsonage-house at Epworth, when it was on fire.

pounds behind him; praying, *God be merciful to me, an unprofitable servant.* He desired this inscription, if any, should be put upon his tombstone.'

"He made it his request to his wife and me, to forget all that is past, which I very readily agreed to; and once more offered her my service in great sincerity. Neither will I suspect hers; but hope she will *do* as she *says*.

"I have been generally blamed for my absence in this time of danger. Several asked, 'Does Mr. Charles know of his brother's illness?' and were answered, 'Yes, yes; many have informed him.' All my correspondents agreed in their accounts that my brother was much better: of which his ministering last Sunday at the chapel left me no doubt. Then they might have apprized me of his danger; but none thought of me till Tuesday, when they looked for his death every hour. He had ordered letters to be wrote by Charles Perronet to the Preachers to meet on the 21st instant; but not a word of notice was sent to me. Now I hear, several letters were wrote me on Tuesday night; but I have left them unreceived at Bristol.

"I attended my brother while he rode out for the air, and was surprised to see him hold out for three quarters of an hour, and even gallop back the whole way.

"In the afternoon I met the Leaders, and spoke them comfort; then called on my patient, J. Hutchinson, whose journey has done him more good than harm.

"My text at the Foundery was, 'And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to his will, He heareth us. And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.' (1 John v. 14, 15.) Whether the congregation received benefit, I know not, being myself confused, and overwhelmed with trouble and sorrow.

"God made me to the society, I trust, a son of consolation. I showed them the cause of my brother's danger, even our own unprofitableness, and the nation's rejecting his testimony. I strongly exhorted them to repent, and do their first works; and *on no other condition* to hope for my brother's recovery. I told them I was persuaded his time was come; and he would have died now, had not the prayer of faith interposed, and God commanded the shadow to go

backward: that still his life was altogether precarious, and they must wrestle on, before the decree brought forth, for a full reverse of the sentence. In prayer God gave us strong cries and tears, and consolation of hope. I told them that I neither could nor would stand in my brother's place; (if God took him to himself;) for I had neither a body, nor a mind, nor talents, nor grace, for it.

“The whole society appear alive, so stirred up, so zealous, so prayerful, as I never knew them. Many backsliders are returning to us. Many secret friends now show themselves. The strangers stop us in the streets with their inquiries; and the people in general seem to find out the value of a blessing they are going to lose.

“I carried Mr. Hutchinson to a quieter lodging, which the friendly Mr. Lloyd offered us at his house. John Jones comes post-haste from Bristol; spent the useful evening with us; and then slept with me at the Foundery.

“Monday, Dec. 3d. I was at a loss for a subject at five, when I opened the Revelation, and with fear and trembling began to expound it. Our Lord was with us of a truth, and comforted our hearts, with the blessed hope of his coming to reign before his ancients gloriously. Martin Luther, in ■ time of trouble, used to say, ‘Come, let us sing the forty-sixth psalm.’ I would rather say, ‘Let us read the Revelation of Jesus Christ.’ What is any private or public loss, or calamity; what are all the advantages Satan ever gained, or shall gain, over particular men, or churches, when all things, good and evil, Christ's power, and Antichrist's, conspire to hasten the grand event, to fulfil the mystery of God, and make all the kingdoms of the earth become the kingdoms of Christ?

“I asked each of the select band, whether they could pray in faith for my brother's life. God has kept them all in darkness and suspense. Those who have most power with Him have received no certain answer, being constrained to give him up FIRST, if haply they may then receive him again, as from the dead. Some have told me, it was parting with a right eye, with one much dearer than their natural father. Many have found strong, increasing hope of his recovery; and a few, whose experience I less depend on, are confident of it.

“I called on loving, faithful Damaris Perronet, and then visited my patient at Mr. Lloyd’s. With him I stayed till near one, the time I had appointed for prayer at the Foundery. Many faithful souls then joined me in behalf of my brother; or, rather, of the Church and nation. Neither was our Lord absent. Great comfort and confidence we received, that all shall work together for good; even for the glory of God, and furtherance of the Gospel.

“From intercession I waited on my sister, to Dr. Fothergill, who is much pleased with his patient’s present case, and greatly approves of his hastening to the Hotwells at Bristol. To-morrow afternoon he promises to visit him at Lewisham.”

In the course of this day, Mr. Charles Wesley addressed the following letter to his wife. It contains some particulars which he has not inserted in his journal, relative to his present circumstances and those of his brother.

“Dearest Sally,—I hope you have recovered your fright. My brother may live, if he hastens to Bristol. Prayer is made daily by the church to God for him: yet no one, that I can find, *has received his petition*. Whether he comes or not, I am stationed here till after Christmas.

“My brother entreated me yesterday, and his wife, to forget all that is past, on both sides. I *sincerely* told him I would, for his sake, as well as Christ’s sake. My sister said the same.

“Mrs. Blackwell and Dewal send you a loving heart. They have but one, you know, between them. Dudy Perronet salutes you in great love, as does Mr. Lloyd.

“Next Friday we spend in prayer for my brother, meeting at five, seven, ten, and one. Join all who love him for his work’s sake.

“Who is your chaplain? When none is near, you should read prayers yourself, as my mother, and many besides, have done. Be much in private prayer. What the Lord will do with me I know not; but am fully persuaded I shall not long survive my brother. Farewell.”

He adds, in his journal, “Dec. 4th. I proceeded in the Revelation, and found the blessing promised to those who read or hear the words of that book. From six to seven I employed with the Preachers in prayer for my brother and the Church.

“ This morning I got the long-wished-for opportunity of talking fully to him of all which has passed since his marriage : and the result of our conference was, perfect peace and harmony.

“ Mrs. Dewal and Blackwell observed what a fair opportunity my wife might have had for inoculating with her sister. I answered, that I left every one to his own conscience ; but for my part, I looked upon it as taking the matter out of God’s hands ; and I should choose, if it depended on me, to trust her entirely to Him. Before five I returned to the Foundery, and found two letters from Lady Huntingdon : the first informing me they apprehended my wife was taken ill of the small-pox, as soon as I left her : the second, that it was come out, and the confluent kind. She had been frightened, after my departure, with one’s abruptly telling her my brother was dead, and sickened immediately.”

On receiving the sad intelligence of his wife’s dangerous illness, Mr. Charles Wesley consulted his friend Mr. Lloyd, of Devonshire-square, who advised him by all means to fly where his heart directed. He preached in the evening on, “ Let not your heart be troubled : ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions ; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.” (John xiv. 1, 2.) The next morning, taking the advice of his friend, he left London for Bristol, where he arrived about four o’clock in the afternoon of the next day. “ I found my dearest friend,” says he, “ on a restless bed of pain, loaded with the worst kind of the worst disease. Mrs. Vigor and Jones were ministering to her day and night. Sister Burgess, a most tender, skilful Christian woman, was her nurse. Good Lady Huntingdon attends her constantly twice a day, having deferred her journey to her son, on this account.

“ She had expressed a longing desire to see me just before I came, and rejoiced for the consolation. I saw her alive, but O how changed ! ‘ The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint ! From the sole of the foot, even unto the head, there is no soundness in her ; but wounds and putrefying sores.’ Yet under her sorest burden she blessed God, that she had not been inoculated, receiving the disease as immediately sent from God. I found the door of prayer

wide open, and entirely acquiesced in the divine will. I would not have it otherwise. God choose for me and mine, in time and eternity ! ”

For the long space of twenty-two days Mrs. Wesley continued in imminent danger, from this dreadful disease, uncertain respecting the issue. A part of this anxious time her husband was compelled to spend in London, supplying the chapels there ; his afflicted brother being still laid aside from his ministry. He preached comfort to others while his own heart was sad ; daily apprehending that the next post would bring the intelligence that his wife was no more. In this emergency Mr. Whitefield gave striking proof of that generous and sympathetic spirit by which he was actuated. He wrote a letter to Mr. John Wesley, full of encouragement and affection, which has been often printed, and is well known. Two letters of a similar kind he also addressed to his friend Charles, which are equally worthy of being preserved as an honour to his memory. They were both written in London, and sent to Charles in Bristol.

“ Dec. 13th, 1753. My dear Friend,—The Searcher of hearts alone knows the sympathy I have felt for you and yours ; and in what suspense my mind hath been concerning the event of your present circumstances. I pray and inquire, inquire and pray again ; always expecting to hear the worst. Ere this can reach you, I expect the lot will be cast, either for life or death. I long to hear, that I may partake, like a friend, either of your joy or sorrow. Blessed be God for that promise, whereby we are assured that all things work together for good to those who love Him ! This may make us, at least, resigned when called to part with our Isaacs. But who knows the pain of parting, when the wife and the friend are conjoined ? To have the desire of one’s eyes cut off with a stroke, what but grace, omnipotent grace, can enable us to bear it ? But who knows ? perhaps the threatened stroke may be recalled ; and my dear friend enjoy his dear yoke-fellow’s company a little longer. Surely the Lord of all lords is preparing you for further usefulness by these complex trials. We must be purged, if we would bring forth more fruit.

“ Your brother, I hear, is better. To-day I intended to have seen him ; but Mr. Blackwell sent me word, he thought

he would be out for the air. I hope Mr. Hutchinson is better. But I can scarce mention anybody now, but dear Mr. Wesley. Pray let me know how it goes with you. My wife truly joins in sympathy and love. Night and day indeed you are remembered by, my dear friend,

“Yours,” &c.

“Dec. 20th, 1753. My dear Friend,—I most sincerely rejoice, and have given private and public thanks, for the recovery of your dear yoke-fellow. My pleasure is increased by seeing your brother so well as I found him on Tuesday at Lewisham. O that you may *both* spring afresh, and your latter end increase more and more! Talk not of having no more work to do in the vineyard. I hope all our work is but just beginning. I am sure it is high time for me to begin to do something for Him who hath done and suffered so much for me. Near forty years old, and such a dwarf! The winter come already, and so little done in the summer! I am ashamed, I blush, and am confounded; and yet God blesseth us here. Truly, his outgoings are seen in the Tabernacle. The top-stone is brought forth. We will now cry, ‘Grace! grace!’ I must away. Our joint respects attend you *all*. I hope Mr. Hutchinson mends. I hear his brother is dead. Lord, make us, make me also ready! My most dutiful respects await our elect Lady. God willing, she shall hear soon from, my dear friend,

“Yours,” &c., “in our common Lord.”

Scarcely was Mrs. Wesley so far recovered as to be considered out of danger, when her infant son was attacked by the fearful disease. This was a severe affliction to both the parents; for he was their only child; their first-born; one year and four months old. He had shown a mental precocity with regard to music, of which there are few examples, having both sung a tune, and beaten time, at the age of twelve months. He bore the honoured name of John Wesley. Intelligence of his sickness was conveyed to the father in London, by the following letter, written by Miss Rebecca Gwynne, Mrs. Wesley’s sister:—

“Sunday night, Dec. 30th. As we suppose my dear brother Wesley will be glad to know how the poor little boy does, I cannot help writing by this post to inform you, that he rested tolerably last night; but has the distemper very

thick ; and the Doctor says he cannot tell what sort it will prove till the ninth day is passed, being so treacherous a disorder. About Wednesday we hope the worst will be over. My sister desires her love and thanks to all friends who were so kind as to remember her. My eyes are so weak, that I can only add our love, and desires to see you as soon as possible."

To this letter Mrs. Wesley affixed the following postscript:—"Many thanks I return my dearest friend for his last ; and I trust all your prayers will be answered on me. Nothing is worth living for, but to enjoy and glorify our God. O that this may be the end for which my life is lengthened ! I found no desire for a longer continuance on earth, than till I found my soul meet for the inheritance of the saints in light ; and that I firmly believe Christ would have granted even me, had He called me hence in my late dangerous illness. To walk always in the light of God's countenance is most desirable ; but some seem more highly favoured in that than others. I long to be one of those ; but when will it be ? You have been short in gratitude in not writing to my worthy Doctor, who is daily here to see dear Jacky. My heart yearns for him so, that I wish I could bear the distemper again, instead of him : but he is in our great Preserver's hands, who cares for him. The Lord bless you. Farewell."

The suffering little innocent only survived the writing of this letter eight days, when his redeemed spirit entered into rest. His remains were interred before the father returned to Bristol. Some of his light and delicate hair, folded in paper, lies before the writer of this narrative. This sacred family relic bears the following inscription, neatly written by the bereaved mother:—"My dear Jacky Wesley's hair : who died of the small-pox, on Monday, Jan. 7th, 1753-4, aged a year, four months, and seventeen days. I shall go to him ; but he never shall return to me."

It was not to be expected that Mr. Charles Wesley could pass through these scenes of domestic affliction, bereavement, and deliverance,—of chastisement and mercy,—without pouring forth the feelings of his heart in sacred verse. It was in devotional poetry that his emotions, both of joy and sorrow, found their most natural and appropriate expression.

Accordingly we find that he composed two hymns, under the title of "Oblation of a sick Friend," which describe the working of his mind while the wife of his bosom was suspended between life and death. They are remarkable for their tenderness and piety. The following stanzas are a specimen :—

Can we of ourselves resign
The most precious loan divine ?
With thy loveliest creature part ?
Lord, thou seest our bleeding heart.

Whom thyself hast planted there,
From our bleeding heart to tear ;
This most sensibly we feel,
This we own impossible.

Dearest of thy gifts below,
Nature cannot let her go ;
Nature, till by grace subdued,
Will not give her back to God.

But we *would* receive the power
Every blessing to restore ;
Would to thy decision bow,
Would be meekly willing now.

If thou *wilt* thine own revoke,
Now inflict the sudden stroke ;
Take our eyes' and heart's desire,
Let her in thine arms expire.

Stripp'd of all, we come to thee,
As our day our strength shall be ;
Jesus, Lord, we come to prove
All the virtue of thy love.

When the creature-streams are dry,
Thou thyself our wants supply :
Thou of life the Fountain art,
Rise eternal in our heart.

* * * * *

Hear us, then, thou Man of grief ;
O make haste to our relief !
After thee for help we cry ;
Come before our sister die.

Jesus, evermore the same,
 Manifest thy saving name ;
 Good Physician from above
 Heal the object of thy love !

Humbly prostrate at thy feet,
 We our will to thine submit :
 Yet before thy will is shown,
 Trembling, we present our own.

Till thy Love's design we *see*,
 Earnest, but resign'd to thee,
 Suffer us for life to pray ;
 Bless us with her longer stay.

Let her long ■ witness live,
 That thou canst on earth forgive ;
 Live thine utmost love to see,
 Live to serve thy church and thee.

Then, when all her work is done,
 Thou thy faithful servant crown ;
 Take her, Jesus, to thy breast,
 Take us all to endless rest.

Two hymns he wrote “ For one visited with sickness ; ” which were doubtless intended for the use of Mrs. Wesley, suffering on the bed of languishing and pain. Two more he placed in her hands, as a “ Thanksgiving after recovery from the small-pox.” The following is the second of them :—

Sing to the Prince of life and peace !
 Let every tongue *my* Saviour bless,
 So strong to help in danger's hour,
 So present in his healing power,
 And from the margin of the grave
 So good a dying worm to save !

Can I forget the solemn day,
 When grappling with my foe I lay ?
 O'er my weak flesh, from foot to head,
 The loathsome leprosy was spread,
 The foulest plague our race can feel,
 The deadliest fruit of sin and hell.

The poison boil'd in every vein ;
 The fire broke out in raging pain ;
 I sunk oppress'd through all my powers,
 With bruises, wounds, and putrid sores ;

My body rack'd in every part,
And sick to death my fainting heart.

Jesus beheld my last distress,
And turn'd the current of disease ;
He stopp'd my spirit on the wing,
And chased away the grisly king :
His wonder-working arm I own,
And give the praise to God alone.

He in the kind Physician came,
(Bow all to Jesu's balmy name !)
Amidst my weeping friends He stood,
And mix'd the cordial with his blood,
Display'd his dead-reviving art,
And pour'd his life into my heart.

Brought from the gates of death, I give
My life to Him by whom I live ;
Raised from a restless bed of pain,
I render Him my strength again ;
And only wait to prove his grace,
And only breathe to breathe his praise.

He wrote also a "Prayer for a dying child," of which the following is a specimen :—

When thou didst our Isaac give,
Him we trembled to receive ;
Him we call'd not ours, but thine ;
Him we promised to resign.

Meekly we our vow repeat ;
Nature *shall* to grace submit ;
Let him on the altar lie ;
Let the victim live, or die !

Yet thou know'st what pangs of love
In a father's bosom move ;
What the agony to part
Struggling in a mother's heart.

Sorely tempted and distress'd,
Can we make the fond request ?
Dare we pray for a reprieve ?
Need we ask that he may live ?

God we absolutely trust,
Wise, and merciful, and just ;
All thy works to thee are known,
All thy blessed will be done.

If his life a snare would prove,
 Rob us of thy heavenly love,
 Steal our hearts from God away,
 Mercy will not let him stay.

If his life would matter raise
 Of thine everlasting praise,
 More his Saviour glorify,
 Mercy will not let him die.

For the purpose of soothing the feelings of his bereaved wife, still enfeebled by disease, and of rendering the loss of their son subservient to her spiritual benefit, Mr. Charles Wesley wrote the following hymn, which he entitled, "A mother's act of resignation on the death of a child :"—

Peace, my heart, be calm, be still,
 Subject to my Father's will !
 God, in Jesus reconciled,
 Calls for *his* beloved child ;
 Who on me himself bestow'd
 Claims the purchase of his blood.

Child of prayer, by grace divine
 Him I willingly resign,
 Through his last convulsive throes
 Born into the true repose ;
 Born into the world above,
 Glorious world of light and love.

Through the purple fountain brought,
 To his Saviour's bosom caught,
 Him in the pure mantle clad,
 In the milk-white robe array'd,
 Follower of the Lamb I see ;
 See the joy prepared for me !

Lord, for this alone I stay,
 Fit me for eternal day ;
 Then thou wilt receive thy bride
 To the souls beatified ;
 Then with all thy saints I meet,
 Then my rapture is complete.

But Mr. Charles Wesley's most remarkable poetical composition, written upon this mournful and joyous occasion, was a hymn in eight parts, containing fifty-one stanzas, of six lines each, in which he gives full vent to his own deep and irrepressible feelings. It forms a perfect con-

trast to the calm and soothing verses which he put into the mouth of his sorrowing and enfeebled wife. Here the poet, the father, the husband, the man of God, are seen to the greatest advantage. He begins in the language of passionate regret; he offers thanksgivings to God for the mother's preservation; he celebrates the child's escape from all the toils, the sorrows, the perils of life, and his admission into the company of the heavenly harpers; and in all the confidence and joy of hope, he anticipates his own glorification, and that of the mother, with their sainted child; praying, at the same time, for a sanctified use of the bereavement. The infant was gone; and the parents now take God alone for their portion. The following specimens are given. Who can read the touching lines without tears? Who can see the secrets of a generous and sanctified nature disclosed, without admiration and love?

ON THE DEATH OF A CHILD.

DEAD! dead! the child I loved so well!
 Transported to the world above!
 I need no more my heart conceal:
 I never dared indulge my love;
 But may I not indulge my grief,
 And seek in tears a sad relief?

Mine earthly happiness is fled,
 His mother's joy, his father's hope,
 (O had I died in Isaac's stead!)
 He *should* have lived, my age's prop;
 He should have closed his father's eyes,
 And follow'd me to paradise.

But hath not Heaven, who first bestow'd,
 A right to take his gifts away?
 I bow me to the sovereign God,
 Who snatch'd him from the evil day!
 Yet nature *will* repeat her moan,
 And fondly cry, "My son! my son!"

Turn from him, turn, officious thought!
 Officious thought presents again
 The thousand little acts he wrought,
 Which wound my heart with soothing pain:
 His looks, his winning gestures, rise,
 His waving hands, and laughing eyes!

Those waving hands no more shall move,
 Those laughing eyes shall smile no more :
 He cannot now engage our love,
 With sweet insinuating power
 Our weak, unguarded hearts ensnare,
 And rival his Creator there.

Farewell, (since Heaven ordains it so,)
 Farewell, my yearning heart's desire !
 Stunn'd with the providential blow,
 And scarce beginning to respire,
 I own, and bow me in the dust,
 My God is good, and wise, and just.

He justly claims the first-born son,
 Accepts my costly sacrifice,
 Dearest of all his gifts, but one,
 At his command the victim dies !
 He but resumes what He had given,
 He takes my sacrifice to heaven.

His wisdom *timed* the *lingering* stroke ;
 The mother first resolved to save ;
 The mother left, the child he took,
 Nor let them share a common grave ;
 And still my better-half survives,
 Joseph is dead, but Rachel lives.

The Searcher of my heart can tell
 How oft its fondness I withstood ;
 When forced a father's joy to feel,
 I shrunk from the suspected good,
 Refused the perilous delight,
 And hid me from the pleasing sight.

The labour of my aching breast,
 The racking fears, to God are known ;
 I could not in his danger rest ;
 I trembled for my helpless son :
 But all my fears for ever cease,
 My son hath gain'd the port of peace !

The travail of my soul is past,
 Severer than the mother's throes,
 For lo ! my child is *born* at last,
 The glorious life of angels knows ;
 He bursts yon ambient azure shell,
 He flies from us with God to dwell.

Look down, thou happy spirit, look down,
An eye of pitying love let fall
On us, who long to share thy crown,
Who for that spotless mantle call,
In which thou shalt for ever shine,
The robe of righteousness divine.

Great King of saints, to thee alone
For mercy and for grace we pray :
Thy glorious grace hath saved the son,
The parents next to heaven convey,
Thy power and goodness to adore,
Where death and parting is no more.

Jesus, our sole support thou art,
Our only hope in deep distress ;
Thy comforts calm the troubled heart ;
And, cheer'd by thy victorious grace,
The mourner gives her wailings o'er,
And Rachel weeps her loss no more.

Who weeping build our infant's tomb,
With joy we hasten to our own :
That happiest day will quickly come,
When we shall lay our burden down,
When loosed from earth our souls shall soar,
And find whom we shall lose no more.

No human heart can e'er conceive
The transports of our meeting there,
Where pure departed spirits live,
Where *one* we fondly deem'd our heir,
To full angelic stature grown,
Inherits an immortal crown.

Arrived above, the stranger stands,
Encompass'd with acclaiming quires ;
He hears, and waves his plausive hands,
Transported with the harpers' lyres,
Expands his tuneful soul to prove
The' harmonious powers of heavenly love.

Angels, rejoice ! a child is born
Into your happier world above !
Let poor short-sighted mortals mourn,
While on the wings of heavenly love
An everlasting spirit flies,
To claim his kindred in the skies.

His few sad days of guiltless pain
 Are all irrevocably gone ;
 Escaped from earth without a stain,
 My heart's desire, my darling son,
 Hath first attain'd his endless rest,
 Hath reach'd his heavenly Father's breast.

And shall I for his bliss repine ?
 And shall I for his absence grieve ?
 Or rather bless the choice divine ;
 With awful joy and thanks receive
 The period of my countless cares,
 The answer of my thousand prayers ?

My prayers are seal'd, my child is fled,
 Is safe on that eternal shore :
 No longer I his dangers dread,
 The poisonous world's bewitching power,
 The charms of sin, the tempter's art,
 The fondness of a parent's heart.

No more my eyes with tears o'erflow,
 No more in deep distress I pray,
 " Ah ! save my child from endless woe ;
 Ah ! take him from the evil day ;
 Nor let the *man* his God deny ;
 Nor let him live to sin, and die ! "

'Tis finish'd ! all his course of pain !
 'Tis finish'd ! all our task of care !
 We turn us to our rest again,
 In solemn praise, and humble prayer :
 For lo ! our awful office ends ;
 For lo ! our sacred charge ascends !

The child of whom we seem bereaved,
 Whom feeble flesh would still deplore,
 Our heavenly Father hath received,
 And kindly bids us weep no more ;
 But cheerfully his loan resign,
 And leave him in the arms divine.

Father, we make thy deed our own,
 Submissive to thy wisest choice ;
 Though nature give a parting groan,
 Our spirits *shall* in thee rejoice,
 And thankfully at last approve
 The' appointments of eternal love.

'Twas love ordain'd so short a date,
So light a load of penal pain,
And hence the favourite of fate
Put on and burst his fleshly chain ;
Received and rendering up his breath,
Retired into the shades of death.

But we, by faith's illumined eye,
Beyond the cloud of death behold
A sun in yon eternal sky,
Which gilds and turns the cloud to gold ;
And in that golden light I see
The child that owed his birth to me.

In a new world of light and bliss,
An angel now our child appears ;
His joy hath made our sorrows cease ;
His looks have dried our selfish tears ;
His looks, where heavenly glories shine,
And call us to the sight divine.

Father of lights, and God of love,
Thy call we joyfully obey,
And hasten to our friends above,
Who for their old companions stay ;
Till all before thy face shall meet,
And find in thee our heaven complete.

Blessing, and love, and thanks, and praise,
Wisdom, and majesty, and power,
And riches, more than earth can raise,
To God, who, at the destined hour,
Hath singled out our only son,
And caught an infant to his throne !

Of the severity of Mrs. Wesley's sufferings from the small-pox, ample proof has already been given. Her husband said, that there was no sound part in her entire frame, from the soles of her feet, to the crown of her head. Some private letters state, that, after the disease had generally disappeared, it was a considerable time before her nose was healed. The consequence was, that, after her recovery, her features were so completely changed, that her most intimate friends could not know her, by merely looking at her countenance ; so deep was the impress which the malady had left of its virulence. Her husband showed the tenderness and strength of

his affection by declaring, that he admired her more than he had ever done before. She was about twenty years younger than himself; and now that she had lost her beauty, she had also lost her very youthful appearance; so that the unseemly disparity between their ages was no longer perceptible. This delicate remark, which he often repeated, was highly characteristic of the man, and well calculated to remove any uneasy feeling that might perchance have arisen in her mind.

Mr. Charles Wesley had another ground of grateful joy, besides that of his wife's recovery. His brother also began to regain his lost strength, and was likely soon to resume his wonted labours. Under the advice of his Physicians, Mr. John Wesley retired to the Hotwell, near Bristol; and being for a time unable either to travel or preach, he applied himself to writing explanatory notes upon the New Testament: a work which he had long meditated; but which, in all probability, he would not have undertaken, had it not been for this unexpected sickness. When he had made some considerable progress in his work, he was visited by Charles from London; and they spent several days together, comparing the translation of the Gospels with the original Greek; and reading Dr. Heylyn's Lectures, and Doddridge's Family Expositor, of which important use was made in the publication. Charles, who was an excellent critic, and possessed a fine taste in composition, afforded his brother more assistance in this work than in any other with which John's name was connected. The revisal of the book, some years after it had been printed, was greatly indebted to his piety, taste, and judgment.

As the spring and summer advanced, John was able to resume his ministry, and he went forth to his labour with increased spirituality and power. At the same time Charles Skelton, an Itinerant Preacher of some standing, and of useful talents, resigned his connexion with the Wesleys, and became an Independent Minister. This awakened considerable jealousy among his brethren, lest others should follow his example. They therefore entered into a written agreement at the ensuing Conference, not to act independently of each other; so that the breach which had caused uneasiness among them, served to put them upon their guard, and unite

them more closely together. Skelton appears to have begun his course as an Independent Minister at Bury St. Edmund's. He afterwards became the Pastor of a small congregation in Southwark, which is said to have become extinct long before his death. As an Itinerant Preacher he was very useful; and his secession was a cause of deep regret. When he left his old friends, he changed his creed; but from that period he appears to have been of little benefit to the world. His light was hid under a bushel, and his influence scarcely felt.

CHAPTER XIX.

IN the month of July, 1754, Mr. Charles Wesley accompanied his brother to the neighbourhood of Norwich, where he continued several weeks, preaching in the open air with superior zeal and effect. John remained in a delicate state of health, so as to be unable to bear either a rapid journey, or frequent preaching. He therefore soon left Charles, to prosecute his work with such help as he could obtain, and retired again to the Bristol Hotwell, by the advice of Dr. Fothergill. Their design in leaving London together at this time appears to have been, partly the improvement of John's health; and partly that they might unitedly revise and transcribe the Notes on the New Testament, at the house of their friends, Captain and Mrs. Galatin, of Lakenham, who were both pious, and their personal friends. At this period the Wesleys had no place of worship in Norwich; and if they had any society, it was very small.

Norwich was at this time in a state of violent excitement. When the Wesleys expelled James Wheatley from their community, he came to this city, where he appears to have been an entire stranger. He began to preach in the midst of bitter opposition, but succeeded at length in collecting a considerable number of people, whom he called his "lambs," and became somewhat honourable. His doctrine and manner were smooth and soft, addressed to the tender passions of the people, rather than to their understandings and consciences; and in his private conduct he was a perfect libertine. Hitherto he had succeeded in the concealment of his wickedness; but it was now brought to light, and the successive disclosures that were made awakened the public indignation, and armed the mob with tenfold fury. The populace understood not the niceties of theological controversy; but they knew that a teacher of Christianity ought not to be a wholesale adulterer.

Such was the state of things when Mr. Charles Wesley arrived. The following brief notices, which he wrote at the

time, will show the situation in which he was placed. They prove, too, that his spirit as a field-Preacher was unimpaired. He was still able to brave the noise of the waves, the madness of the people, and maintain the truth of God amidst the fiercest opposition. There was in him a living energy which nothing from without could either subdue or intimidate. He usually preached twice a day during his stay in Norwich; and the result was, the opening of a Methodist chapel in that city.

“ July 8th, 1754. At four I took horse for Norwich, with my brother, Charles Perronet, and Robert Windsor. We were in fear for my brother, lest the heat and the journey should be too great for him; but the rain which God sent down all yesterday had laid the dust, and cooled the air. The clouds also were ordered to attend us all the day; so that we had an easy and a pleasant ride to Braintree.

“ July 9th. Still God, in the weather, favoured us, and brought us safe to Bury, and ten miles beyond it.

“ July 10th. Our leisurely travelling allowed us many hours for writing. Between seven and eight we set out, and by eleven reached Attleborough. Here our brother Edwards met us, and brought us in the evening to Captain Galatin's, at Lakenham, a mile and a half from Norwich. The Captain brought us news that the whole city was in an uproar about poor Mr. Wheatley, whose works of darkness are now brought to light, whereby the people are so scandalized and exasperated, that they are ready to rise, and tear him to pieces. We therefore do not wonder that the Clergy are not forward to show their friendly inclinations toward us. Yet one has sent us a civil message, excusing his not visiting us till the tumult is over.

“ July 11th. Captain Galatin dined with the Mayor, a wise, resolute man, who labours for peace; but greatly apprehends the rising of the people. We thought it best to lie by till the storm should a little subside. Still the waves rage horribly. The streets ring all day with James's wickedness. From morning till night, the Captain informs us, the Mayor has been employed in taking the affidavits of the women whom he has tried to corrupt. These accounts are printed, and cried about the city.

“ What could Satan or his apostles do more, to shut the

door against the Gospel, in this place, for ever? Yet several came to us, entreating us to preach; and at night a great number were gathered together to hear us. The advertisement we had printed here, last year, disclaiming Mr. Wheatley, did much good, and with the blessing of God helped the people to distinguish. Our host also has assured the Mayor, Mr. Wheatley is no Methodist, or associate of ours; and the Clergy, as well as people in general, are sensible of our inviolable attachment to the Church.

“ July 12th. We continued in our retreat, transcribing the Notes,* and leaving God to work, and prepare our way at Norwich.”

Mr. John Wesley says, “ On Sunday, the 14th, at seven in the morning, my brother took his stand in the street. A multitude of people quickly gathered together, and were tolerably quiet, all things considered. I would willingly have taken his place in the evening, but had neither voice nor strength.”

Charles adds, under the date of July 16th, “ A lady yesterday sent my brother an invitation to preach in her great room, at the window, whence he might be heard by those without. But to-day an Alderman, threatening persecution, has made her draw back. I walked to Lakenham, and stopped my brother. The rest of the day we spent in transcribing.

“ July 17th. Word was brought us that the gentlemen were much displeased with their disappointment last night. In the morning James Wheatley overtook me and Charles Perronet in our way to Lakenham. I would hope he intended to pass by us; but Charles, looking back, and spying him, forced him to stop, and speak to us. He asked me how I did; to which I made no answer. Charles cried out, ‘ Ride on, James; ride on; do not talk to us. I pray God give you repentance.’ He asked me then how my brother did; but still I said nothing. Then, recovering himself, he said, ‘ And God give you repentance, Mr. Perronet.’ I bade Charles turn back, and leave him; which he did; being grieved at the hardness of his heart.

“ At six in the evening we went forth. My text was, ‘ The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness,

* The Rev. John Wesley’s Notes on the New Testament.

and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' The people were amazingly serious. All behaved with the utmost decency. It is evidently the Lord's doing! Some of the fiercest persecutors are our fastest friends, and constantly attend the word. Many appear affected under it. Not one dares open his mouth against it as yet. My brother recapitulated and confirmed my sayings. In the mouth of two witnesses shall every word be established.

" July 18th. At four my brother, by the advice of Charles Perronet, set out with him for Bristol. By how strange a providence has he been brought hither, that he might be sent hence to the Hotwell, the only probable means of restoring his health! I preached at five, from, 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help.' (Hosea xiii. 9.) Still their patience of the truth continues, or even increases. Near a thousand we have every morning. One man, after I had concluded, spoke a rude word, which drew upon him the general indignation. At night I had a multitude of the great vulgar and small to hear me, with three Justices, and nine Clergymen. The Lord opened my mouth, to convince them of sin; and many, I am persuaded, felt the sword of the Spirit in the word.

" July 20th. I declared to a more numerous audience, it being market-day, 'Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money.' The butchers were continually passing; yet all was quiet till I had done. I passed the day at Lakenham, as usual.

" July 21st. My audience at seven was greatly increased. I spoke from the three first verses of Isaiah lxi.; but dwelt on those words, 'He hath sent me to preach glad tidings to the meek,' or poor. I laboured, as all the week past, to bring them to a sense of their wants; and to this end I have preached the law, which is extremely wanted here. The people have been surfeited with smooth words and flattering invitations. The greater cause have we of wonder and thanksgiving, that they can now endure sound and severe doctrine. I received the sacrament again from the Bishop's hands, among a score communicants. If the Gospel prevails in this place, they will find the difference. I went to St. Peter's, and thence to the street. It rained all the time that I was declaring the office of Christ, in his own words, Isaiah

lxi.; yet none departed. My congregation was lessened by the weather: but those who did attend were all serious, and seemed to receive the word as a thirsty land the showers.

“ July 22d. The rain hindered my preaching. God is providing us a place, an old large house, which the owner, a Justice of Peace, has reserved for us. He has refused several, always declaring he would let it to none but Mr. John Wesley. Last Saturday Mr. Edwards agreed to take a lease for seven years; and this morning Mr. S——n has sent his workmen to begin putting it into repair. The people are much pleased at our taking it. So are not Satan and his Antinomian apostles.

“ My brother’s prophecy is true, that all our caution and tenderness toward them will not hinder their saying all evil of us. The only curse I have had bestowed on me in Norwich was by a *good* woman of Mr. Wheatley’s society: several of which I doubt not are gracious souls, in whose shame and sorrow I sincerely sympathize. Others *show* what manner of spirit they are of by tearing their *supposed* enemies in pieces. They have already found out, that it is I, and our little society of eighteen, have set the people against poor Mr. Wheatley; and I am come hither, with my brother, to execute a design we and Mr. Keymer laid against him in London. I trust, our few children will take my counsel, not to answer them a word; not to meddle with their distractions; but to stand still.

“ July 23d. At five I declared the end of our Lord’s coming, even that they might have life, and have it more abundantly. The seriousness of the people deepens at every discourse. I met Mr. S——n at the house, which is at present a mere heap of rubbish, without walls, roof, floor, doors, or windows. What will this chaos produce? I think it no bad omen, that it was originally a *Foundery*!

“ I wrote all day at Mr. Edwards’s. I hear the blaspheming of the multitude. Their mouths are full of vile expressions,

‘ Offence and torture to the sober ear.’

Woe unto the man who gives such occasion to the enemy to speak reproachfully! At seven I expounded the barren fig-

tree to a people who, notwithstanding all their stumbling-blocks, can endure sound doctrine.

“ July 24th. I preached the Gospel from Isaiah xliii. 22, &c. My congregation at night was considerably increased by the market-folk out of the country. I preached repentance from Rev. i. 7: ‘Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him: even so, Amen.’ The Lord opened my mouth to convince. His word begins to sink into their hearts. Many were in tears on every side. Toward the close, a huge man tried to ride up to me; but the people interposed again and again, till a serious stout man took and led his horse away, and kept the poor drunkard at a due distance. Some in the public-house behind me were noisy and troublesome; on whom I turned, and recommended them to the prayers of the congregation. Satan often shows his willingness and inability to hurt or hinder us. In spite of all, the Gospel has free course, and daily gains ground on the hearers’ hearts.

“ July 25th. The rain drove me into brother Edwards’s house. Only the sincere and serious attended. The poor have a right to the Gospel. I then preached Christ crucified from Zech. xii. 10. They did in that hour look on Him they had pierced, and mourn; particularly one hardened rebel, (that was,) who was in tears the whole time.

“ Yesterday ■ woman came to me, to ask my pardon for having railed at me, or rather, at Mr. Edwards, while passing her. She belonged to the Tabernacle. I commended her ingenuousness, wished all her society like her, and gave her a book. From this many stories were made. I think it best to have no communication at all with Mr. Wheatley, or any of his followers: neither to mention nor to think of him any more than if there was no such sect or sinner upon earth.

“ I passed the day at Lakenham; and at seven preached to a mixed multitude of good and bad. Some of the baser sort talked lewdly and blasphemously, till I turned, and set the terrors of the Lord in array against them. No wonder the slaves could not face me. The words directed to them made many a *sincere* heart tremble. I went on with more power than ever. So immediately did God bring good out of evil.

The number of mourners increases. By and by, they will be ripe for the Gospel.

“ July 26th. I enforced on many listening souls our Lord’s most important words, ‘ Ask, and ye shall receive ; seek, and ye shall find.’ I enjoyed my long-sought solitude all day at Lakenham.

“ July 30th. I preached at five from Isaiah xxxv., and found my mouth opened, as well as the hearers’ hearts. The more Satan rages, the more our Lord will own and bless us. A poor rebel, at the conclusion, lifted up his voice ; for whom I first prayed, and then, turning full upon him, preached repentance and Christ to his heart. I desired him to turn his face toward me, but he could not. However, he felt the invisible chain, which held him to hear the offers of grace and salvation. I have great hopes that Satan has lost his slave. Some have assured me, they saw him depart in tears.

“ I began once more transcribing Dr. Young’s Night Thoughts. No writings but the inspired are more useful to me.

“ At St. Peter’s I heard a very innocent sermon on public worship. There is no railing at present in any of the churches. The Bishop of Exeter’s Letter was cried about the streets all day. We prayed, and went forth at seven, expecting Satan’s appearance. A multitude attended to Hosea xiv. 1 : ‘ O Israel, return unto the Lord ; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity.’ My heart was much enlarged. A very few showed their willingness to disturb, but were soon suppressed. I did not spare them ; and the Lord gave weight to his word. I plainly perceive, there is no strength or counsel against the Lord. Many persons there doubtless are in this great city, who would fain stop the course of the Gospel, and drive it out. Several complain that their fellows will not suffer them to persecute. To say nothing of the Clergy, can Mr. Taylor’s followers digest our doctrine of original sin ? Can either the Pharisees or Sadducees, with which this place abounds, wish us success ? Here are swarms of Papists and Antinomians, who bear us equal good-will. And all Christ’s enemies have a sword put into their hands by that wretched man. It is Satan’s and his interest, that the world should look upon us as all alike. And with this view, no doubt, the Rev. Mr. — published his scandals of

my brother. But he may find himself mistaken. It is too gross to pass even at Norwich. The Clergy, I hear, declare they are satisfied of Mr. John Wesley's unexceptionable character; and the generality of the people are much displeased at the nonsensical tale.

"July 31st. I expounded Isaiah xxxii. 1, 2, to a quiet, attentive congregation, who constantly attend, about two hundred of them, and seem more and more to know their wants. At night I laid the axe to the root, and showed them their actual and original corruption. The strong man was disturbed in his palace, and roared on every side. My strength increased with the opposition. A gentleman on horseback gnashed upon me with his teeth; but my voice prevailed; and they retreated to their stronghold, the ale-house. There with difficulty they procured some butchers to appear in their quarrel; yet they had no commission to approach, till I had done. Then, in the last hymn, they made up to the table with great fury. The foremost often lifted up his stick, to strike me, being within his reach: but he was not permitted. I stayed to pray for them, and walked quietly to my lodgings. Poor Rabshakeh muttered something about the Bishop of Exeter; but did not accept of my invitation to Mr. Edwards's. I am persuaded more good has been done to-night than by any of my former discourses. The concern and love of the people for me are much increased by my supposed danger. We joined together in praise and thanksgiving, as usual; and I slept in peace.

"August 1st. My morning congregation made me ample amends for last night's tumult: so serious, so affected with the word of truth. When I gave notice of preaching in the evening, I did not know what a riotous day it is. Yet after prayer, I went forth, to keep my word, and see if the Lord had any work for me. The hill was covered with drunkards and rioters: but we saw the hand of God turning them aside, and keeping them at a distance. My subject was, 'What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?' The congregation looked like sheep in the midst of wolves: but the wolves had a bridle in their mouths, and could not hurt or disturb the serious. Satan must rage, for his kingdom suffers loss. Many followed me home, with whom I spent some time in prayer. By the time that the

streets are too hot to hold us, we hope our house will be ready.

“ August 2d. I spoke comfortably to the sincere, from Matt. v. 3, &c.: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,’ &c. A gentleman faced me, while I brought all the threatenings of God’s word to bear upon him. He often changed colour, in spite of all his diabolical resolution. The poor people were not ashamed to show their concern. They felt the word, if he did not; and were melted down through his obduracy.

“ I am at a loss for a church, ’Squire D—— having sent his servant to forbid my preaching any more under his wall. I thought of removing my pulpit to Mr. Edwards’s door; but Providence ordered it otherwise, by sending such violent rain to-day, as flooded all the street around us, and filled it up with mire.

“ It being fair-day, we had a large company of drunkards to wait upon us at seven. I stood under a window of the Bell. Satan quickly sent me two of his drunken champions, who did all in their power to interrupt me. Their heads were just as high as mine; and one laid his mouth to my ear, and talked almost the whole time. I was forced, in my own defence, to speak as loud and as fast as I could. And they had no power to disturb me, while I applied the most blessed promise, Isaiah xxxv. 10: ‘The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come with songs unto Zion.’ Many experienced the power of the Gospel, preached with much contention. The wild beasts of the people were quite tame while I pressed through the midst of them.

“ August 3d. I preached Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, with great enlargement; the spirit of the people assisting me. They seem a people prepared of the Lord. He was with us this morning of a truth.

“ August 4th. I met the society at five, with some new members, or rather candidates; for such I esteem them all. I exhorted them to walk unblamable in all the commandments and ordinances. We had sweet fellowship in singing and prayer. At seven I expounded blind Bartimeus; and the Lord bowed their hearts who heard. We never had so large a morning congregation, or so serious. Surely God hath much people in this city.

“ I breakfasted at Mrs. Overton’s, on whose ground Mr. Wheatley’s first Tabernacle was built. She has offered herself as a candidate of society, having stayed in the other till sin forced her out. They are above measure displeased with her. She regards it not, but follows on to know the Lord.

“ I communicated at the cathedral. An elderly Clergyman pointed me, at the table, to where the Ministers were. The number of communicants begins to increase : a sign we do not make a separation, as a zealous advocate of the Church charged me, in going home. I endeavoured to set him right ; and he was in a good measure appeased.

“ Poor James has given them cause for suspicion. He too came to the cathedral at first, as my opponent told me, and pretended to bring others, till he had got so much hold of them, as to take them all from it, and turn them Dissenters. How has he increased our difficulties ! But the power and blessing of God can set all right.

“ I met the society after dinner, and strongly exhorted them to bring forth fruits meet for repentance. I was in great heaviness till five ; and then invited a huge multitude to the great supper, and gave an historical account of the Methodists. Some thought our congregation larger than any before. More serious they surely were. A few ragged drunkards stood at a distance, but were not suffered to make a noise till I had done. Then they lifted up their voice, which made me begin again. I exhorted, sung, prayed, and exhorted again. It was a glorious opportunity. Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory.

“ Our house was crowded afterwards. For an hour I spoke, sang, prayed, ‘ after God.’ A fair prospect we have of a flourishing society, such as shall not be ashamed when they speak with their enemies in the gate. Every soul present, I am persuaded, felt the nearness of our Lord.

“ August 5th. That scripture was fulfilled, ‘ Behold, I stand at the door, and knock : if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.’ We knew not how to part ; though we never part now without a blessing. Five more gave in their names as candidates for the society. Last night a poor backslider came to me, with tears of sincere repentance. He had run well ; been a Leader in London ; but forsaken the fountain

of living water. The Lord has sent after the one lost sheep. I have a strong hope that he will rise again, to fall no more.

“To-day I heard that as soon as I had named my subject yesterday morning, blind Bartimeus, some went away, crying that they had heard enough of him from Wheatley. Poor James had attempted that history, and made lame work of it, and of many others ; which straitens me much. I cannot yet preach from my favourite texts, because he has. He has, as much as in him lay, poisoned the fountain, debased the language of God, hardened the people’s hearts, palled their spiritual appetite, and made them even loathe religion, and all that belongs to it. What mountains are these in their way to Christ ! They can never flow down, but at His presence.

“I dined at Lakenham, and returned with Mrs. Galatin to Norwich. Mrs. Overton, a sincere follower after Christ, drank tea with us. We had hardly time for a prayer before we went forth. A gentleman had been with me yesterday, desiring me to vindicate him from the aspersion of disturbing me in preaching. For his satisfaction I preached, contrary to my design, on the hill. The rioters were there in great numbers. I called them to repentance ; but they stopped their ears, and ran upon me, casting dirt and stones, &c. I stood it for three quarters of an hour ; but it was fighting with beasts. None of us were hurt by their violence, but several frightened. The poor women had the worst of it. The lewd sons of Belial are furnished with weapons enough from the Tabernacle, and talk as inspired by their father. Our people were a good deal discouraged, fearing it will grow worse and worse. (We have a Butler here also, a ringleader of the rioters.)* I endeavoured to hearten them, and exhorted them to greater diligence in prayer. Prayer is our only refuge ; and if our hands be steady, Israel shall prevail.

“August 7th. I preached from, ‘He hath showed thee, O man, what is good ; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God ?’ At seven, God, in answer to our continual prayer, opened the door, in spite of all the powers of darkness. Preaching to these people is indeed threshing the mountains ; yet several of them show great hungering for the word.

* The allusion is to Butler, the ballad-singer at Cork, whose riotous proceedings have been already described.

“August 8th. Our morning hour is always peaceable, and attended with the blessing of the Gospel. The house is filled with the sincere ; and the half-awakened listen without.

“I preached a little after six this evening, according to my notice in the morning, and so disappointed most of the rioters. One drunkard was sent to molest us ; but the bridle was in his as well as his master’s mouth. Many felt the meaning of those awful words : ‘Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name : that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.’ We afterwards returned thanks in the house, and earnestly prayed for the course of the Gospel ; as we always do, both before and after preaching.

“August 9th. I rose after four. At five the Lord was mightily with us, to confirm his word, ‘He shall save his people from their sins.’ Mrs. Br., Mrs. Galatin, with our brother and sister Edwards, joined me in praise and prayer till near seven : a custom we hope, with God’s blessing, to continue.

“At six a tumultuous crowd surrounded me, while I cried aloud, ‘Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts,’ &c. Satan visibly laboured in his children to hinder the Gospel ; which yet they could not hinder. A poor harlot shrieked out for the first quarter of an hour incessantly. I could hear no word but Wheatley. I turned towards her, (but she did not care to show her face,) and pressed her to enter the kingdom with her sister harlots. We heard no more of her. Her allies stood motionless till I dismissed them.

“A huge, black, grisly man followed me into the house, whom I took for a collier. He told me he was a tinker, T. Boulton by name ; had been in all Mr. Wheatley’s riots, and fought for him forty times ; that, understanding I should settle here, he came to offer me his service, and would henceforward fight for me. I thanked him for his non-necessary kindness ; gave him a word of advice, and a book ; and he went away hugely satisfied. I hear it was he that drove off the noisy harlot. We joined, as usual, in giving God the glory of his overruling providence.

“I should not forget that this morning Mr. Wheatley had

the modesty to pay us ■ visit. Mrs. Edwards opened the door, and seeing him, without speaking a word, bad or good, shut it again.

“August 11th. I walked to Norwich by five, and met the society, to our mutual comfort. At seven our street was filled from end to end. I strongly preached ‘God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself.’ He stood by his ambassador, and bowed the hearts of all who heard the word. We never yet had so open a door. Two or three from the Tabernacle mocked at the beginning; but the stream carried them also away before it. This hour-and-a-half has made us amends for all our troubles and buffetings. We acknowledged God hearing prayer. Our brethren at London have surely wrestled for us, and prevailed.

“We had double the usual number of communicants at the cathedral. All who are healed by *our* ministry go and show themselves to the Priest, and enter into the temple with us.

“I wonder we should miss so long, so convenient a place for preaching as our own street is. The Foundery shuts us up on one side; and Mr. Edwards’s and his neighbours on the other. Above three thousand may conveniently stand about the door, and twice as many at the end of Hog-hill. Every place was crowded in the evening, while I enforced the faithful, acceptable saying, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. His power bent down all opposition, and cleared his own way into their hearts. All seemed melted down, or broken to pieces, either by the fire or the hammer. The Gospel had free course. The word was glorified, and ran very swiftly. Let all who prayed for its success give God the praise, and pray on: so shall it grow mightily, and prevail over this great, wicked city.

“Some of the best of the parish, as well as strangers, joined with us for an hour longer in prayer and thanksgiving. I enforced upon them, by particular, close application, both my morning and evening discourse. The Lord was evidently with us in his convincing power.

“August 13th. I walked to Norwich. Many seem ready to close with Christ, and come at his call, the weary and heavy laden. The more disposed they are to receive the Gospel, the more He opens my mouth to make it known. I

got a useful hour in the evening for conversation and prayer with our awakening neighbours.”

In this diligent and faithful manner Mr. Charles Wesley exercised his ministry in the open air at Norwich, for several successive weeks. Early in the morning, and late in the evening, was he at the post of duty; meeting the small society for the purpose of private instruction and encouragement; and in public showing the people the entire corruption of their nature, the spirituality of the law of God, their personal guilt, and just exposure to the miseries of hell; with the method of a sinner's justification through faith in the blood of atonement, and the universal holiness which every believer is both able and bound to exemplify. His preaching was at once evangelical and practical. It was equally removed from the cold and subtle Rationalism of Dr. John Taylor, then resident there, and the whining Antinomianism of James Wheatley. Its seasonableness was undeniable; and it was well adapted to lay the foundation of a permanent work of God in that city. His self-denial, unwearied application to the work of saving souls, and the success with which his efforts were crowned, show that his heart was right with God. Such fidelity on his part was a favourable omen for the country, while his brother was still enfeebled by disease.

Where Mr. Charles Wesley spent the remainder of this year, after his removal from Norwich, we are not informed; but early in the following January we find him at Brecon; having been called thither on account of the dangerous illness of Mrs. Grace Bowen. He left his wife in London. Grace Bowen was the daughter of a Clergyman. She was a woman of a superior understanding. For many years she had resided in the Gwynne family, and had nursed the whole of the children, Mrs. Charles Wesley among the rest. When the Wesleys preached at Garth and the neighbourhood, she was among the first that received the truth. From that time, to her correct morals she added deep Christian piety, and led a most exemplary and useful life. She was therefore highly and justly esteemed. When Charles arrived, this devout matron had fled to the heavenly paradise. On this occasion he addressed the following three letters to his wife, who still remained in London, and lodged at the house of Colonel

Gumley, in Grosvenor-square. The first of these letters, it will be observed, was written on the first anniversary of his child's death. The poetic fragment concerning him, with which the letter concludes, contains a beautiful allusion to the musical propensities of the glorified infant.

"Jan. 7th, 1754-5. Brecon, three o'clock.

'Tis finish'd ! 'tis done ! The spirit is fled ;
The prisoner is gone, The Christian is dead !
The Christian is living ——

And we shall live also, when we have shook off this body of death, and overtaken our happy, happy friend in paradise.

"I rode hard to see her before her flight ; but it is my loss, not hers, that the chariot carried her up last Thursday. I only write, in the utmost haste, to assure you, my best beloved friend, that I am perfectly well, and all our friends here. More in my next. Salute our friends in both Squares.

Hail the *sad*, memorable day,
On which my Isaac's soul took wing !
With us he *would* no longer stay,
But, soaring where archangels sing,
Join'd the congratulating quire,
And swell'd their highest raptures higher.

His soul, attuned to heavenly praise,
Its strong celestial bias show'd,
And, fluttering to regain its place,
He broke the cage, and reach'd his God :
He pitch'd in yon bright realms above,
Where all is harmony and love.

Imperfect."

"Brecon, Jan. 10th. My dearest Sally would be greatly comforted, to hear what I hear hourly of our translated friend. She insisted on Becky's rejoicing, as soon as she should be safe landed: which checked her sorrow indeed ; and God has farther comforted her by my coming. But my Sally, I fear, wants me on the same occasion. Yet why should I fear your self-love should get the better of your love and desire of a friend's happiness ? Her last human desire was

to see you and me ; but this also she gave up a week before her departure, and lay rejoicing and praising God, and blessing all about her with her prayers and counsels.

“Some weeks before she said to your sisters, ‘You may think it delusion ; but I do really enjoy at times such joy as is unutterable, and full of glory.’ Expect more particulars in the hymns I am making for her.

“Poor Becky has lost her only friend. She and I are very happy together ; and the society are in a very flourishing way. Yesterday I spent an hour with Howell Harris, to our mutual satisfaction. His soul is, after all, alive to God, and put life into me. Monday I spend with him and his wife, who is ready to eat me up for joy.

“To-morrow I dine at Garth ; on Sunday preach at Builth, Maesmynis, another church in the way hither, and here at night. This people will not let me be idle ; and I do not much desire it. To-morrow J. Jones returns to Bristol. On Tuesday I follow. We had a tedious passage of three hours on the water. It is well you was not with us. How fare you at the Square ? How fare our friends ? My best love, and in the best (that is, *your own*) manner, to the Colonel, Mrs. Gumley, and Mrs. D——, and Miss Derby. You have perfected her in English, by this time, I nothing doubt. I suppose you are thinking ere now to remove. In the latter end of this month I hope to find you well in Devonshire-square. When come our friends to Bath ? My father, mother, Becky, &c., salute you most affectionately. The Lord have you always in his keeping ! Farewell.

“Friday, one o’clock. I have just come from preaching to the prisoners. Your last refreshed me with the news of your tolerable health, the rheumatism excepted. Mrs. Gumley is very kind and obliging. But you have a share of her heart, as well as her bed. She keeps good hours, I thought, whatever the young rakes do. I am sorry there are no signs as yet of their decamping. If you think of me, I am not behind with you. Only our *happy friend* shares my best thoughts with you. She has fought the good fight, and finished her course with joy. I am half-impatient to be with her.

“On Thursday I purpose writing to you from Bristol. My letter may welcome you to your old lodgings. Direct

your next to me at Bristol. Once more I commend you to our everlasting Friend ! ”

“ Brecon, Jan. 14th, 1755. My dearest Sally,—I hope you have left your cough behind you. Grosvenor is not half so agreeable to our taste and constitution as Devonshire square. I leave this place to-morrow, having made the most of my short time. Brother Howell was very civil to me at Garth ; Lady Rudd, not uncivil. I preached on Sunday in two churches ; had a miserable ride over the hill to Brecon, drowned and drunk with rain ; but received no hurt. Yesterday I spent mostly at Trevecka. God has not rejected his old servant there. He joins with his wife in cordial love to us both.

“ Touching the family I cannot say much. Poor Becky would be glad to escape from among them. The little society is her chief comfort. The grand preliminary will, I hope, be settled to our satisfaction : then you may depend upon her, when a tender, faithful nurse is needed.

“ Your old nurse and friend requires our congratulation, not condolence. She lies close to dear Molly Leyson. Peggy and Jacky also are of the party above. They are singing together, and pitying *us*. I think it long ere I overtake and join them. Hold out faith and patience a little longer, and we shall all meet around the throne.

“ My love to Mr. Lloyd, if returned. You should comfort poor Betsy. Perhaps the enclosed may help. We *ought* to rejoice : that is certain ; but self-love hinders. Remember me to Mr. Montague, and Jane Hands, and J. Boulton, and all inquirers. Your cloak I shall remember to bring ; but what occasion can you have for pumps ? My best respects and thanks to our friends, whom you have left, or are leaving. I will not despair of seeing them in Charles-street before spring. The Lord shall order all things. Farewell in Him.”

The subjoined hymn, which Mr. Charles Wesley wrote on the occasion of Grace Bowen’s death, is a beautiful and spirited composition, and describes a truly Christian character. The first stanza refers to his disappointed anxiety to see her before she entered into rest. The spiritual benefit which the junior members of the Gwynne family received from the example, the prayers, and the instructions of this

holy and upright woman, to whose care they were confided, will only be fully disclosed “in that day.” Justly was she esteemed and beloved; and, though some persons may regard the office which she sustained as an humble one, deservedly has her name been immortalized in the Wesley poetry. Thus in the patriarchal records we read, “But Deborah, Rebekah’s nurse, died; and she was buried beneath Bethel, under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth;” that is, “the oak of weeping.” (Gen. xxxv. 8.) Spiritual and moral worth, in whomsoever found, “shall be had in everlasting remembrance:” and “a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.”

Stay, thou triumphant spirit, stay,
And bless me ere thou soar’st away,
Where pain can never come!
In vain my call: the soul is fled,
By Israel’s flaming steeds convey’d
To her eternal home.

Yet, lo! I now the blessing find,
The legacy she left behind,
Fruit of her latest prayer:
The answer in my heart I feel,
This fresh supply of heavenly zeal,
To live and die like her.

She lived to serve the God unknown,
And following in a land not sown,
A thorny wilderness;
Beneath the yoke of legal fear
She labour’d hard, with heart sincere,
To *buy* the Saviour’s peace.

Faithful she then in little was,
And zealous for religion’s cause,
To please the Lord most high;
In serving man she humbly sought,
But blindly by her duties thought
Herself to justify.

Yet when she heard the Gospel sound,
That grace doth more than sin abound,
That pard’ning grace is free,
She cast her righteous rags aside;
She closed at once with Christ, and cried,
“He bought the peace for me!”

From hence the fight of faith began,
 From hence in Jesu's steps she ran,
 Nor e'er disgraced the cause ;
 Meek follower of the patient Lamb,
 She prized his honourable shame,
 And gloried in his cross.

By all the rage of fiends and men,
 (The vehement stream, the beating rain,)
 Assail'd on every side ;
 Nor men nor fiends her firmness shock,
 The house was built upon a rock,
 And every storm defied.

What tongue her hidden worth can tell,
 Her active faith, and fervent zeal,
 And works of righteousness ?
 Her thirst and reverence for the word,
 Her love to those who loved her Lord,
 Or but desired his grace ?

She loved them both in word and deed,
 O'erjoy'd a hungry Christ to feed,
 To visit Him in pain ;
 Him in his members she relieved,
 And freely, as she first received,
 Gave Him her all again.

How did her generous bounty deal
 'The widow's scanty oil and meal,
 A treasure for the poor !
 A treasure spent without decrease,
 As miracle revived to bless
 The consecrated store.

But who can paint the strong desire,
 The holy, heaven-enkindled fire,
 That glow'd within her breast ?
 To' ensure the bliss of friends and foes,
 To save the precious souls of those
 She ever loved the best ?

Witness, ye children of her prayers,
 Ye objects of her tenderest cares,
 Into her bosom given ;
 Did not her yearning bowels move,
 With more than a maternal love,
 To train you up for heaven ?

Can you her artless warmth forget,
 Her eager haste to turn your feet
 Into the narrow road ;
 Her counsels kind, her warning fears,
 Her loud protests, her silent tears,
 Whene'er ye stray'd from God ?

She took your guardian angel's part ;
 She watch'd the motions of your heart,
 To pride and pleasure prone ;
 For you she spent her latest breath,
 And urged you, both in life and death,
 To love the Lord alone.

PART II.

O let me on the image dwell,
 The soul-transporting spectacle,
 On which even angels gaze !
 A hoary saint mature for God,
 And shaking off the earthly clod,
 To see his open face.

The happiest hour is come at last,
 When, all her toils and conflicts past,
 She shall to God ascend ;
 Worn out, and spent for Jesu's cause,
 She now takes up her latest cross,
 And bears it to the end.

Summon'd before the throne to' appear,
 She meets the welcome messenger,
 Array'd in mortal pain ;
 Her only fear lest flesh and blood
 Should sink beneath the sacred load,
 Or weakly once complain.

But Christ, the object of her love,
 Doth with peculiar smiles approve,
 And all her fears control ;
 With glory gilds her final scene,
 And not a cloud can rise between,
 To hide Him from her soul.

As a ripe shock of corn brought home,
 Behold her in due season come,
 To claim her full reward !
 Smiling and pleased in death she lies,
 With eagles' eye looks through the skies,
 And sees her heavenly Lord.

The sight her ravish'd spirit fires,
 Her panting, dying breast inspires,
 And fills her mouth with praise ;
 She owns the glorious earnest given ;
 The hidden life breaks out, and heaven
 Resplendent in her face.

Fill'd up with love and life divine,
 The house of clay, the earthly shrine
 Dissolves, and sinks to dust ;
 Without a groan the body dies,
 Her spirit mounts above the skies,
 And mingles with the just.

With mix'd concern her flight we view,
 With joy the' ascending pomp pursue,
 Yet for *our* loss distress'd :
 Our bosom-friend from earth is flown,
 A mother of our Israel gone
 To her eternal rest.

Yet still to us she speaks, though dead,
 She bids us in her footsteps tread,
 As in her Saviour's she ;
 And O that we, like her, may prove
 Our faith unfeign'd, and genuine love,
 And meek humility.

Who live like her, her death shall die ;
 Come, Lord, our hearts to certify
 That we the prize shall gain ;
 Soon as we lay the body down,
 That we shall wear the' immortal crown,
 And in thy glory reign.

Under the date of Jan. 14th, 1755, Mr. Whitefield addressed a letter from Virginia, to his friend Mr. Charles Wesley, breathing his usual spirit of zeal and kindness. He says, "My dear Friend,—Some time ago, when at New-York, I heard you was sick. This, I suppose, hath been the occasion of my not hearing from you. Well ! blessed be God, sick or well, we can go on our way to heaven. This is begun on earth. If it was not so, what should I do in this pilgrim way ? I suppose my circuit upon the continent already hath been two thousand miles ; and a journey of six hundred more before I reach Bethesda yet lies before me. Scenes of wonder have opened all the way. A thousandth part cannot be told. In Virginia the prospect is very promising. I have

preached in two churches, and this morning am to preach in a third. Rich and poor seem quite ready to hear. Many have been truly awakened. Continue to pray for a poor but willing hunter after souls. O it is heavenly sport !

‘ Christ’s presence doth my pains beguile,
And makes the wilderness to smile.’

“ About May I hope to see England. O that you may see me grown in grace ! But, alas ! alas ! I am a dwarf. Lord Jesus, quicken my tardy pace. My cordial respects await your dear yoke-fellow, your brother, and all that are concerned for, or inquire after, my dear friend,

“ Yours most affectionately in our common Lord.”

Every one who had watched the proceedings of the Wesleys, and considered the principles in which they had been trained, must have perceived, from the beginning of their irregularities, that soon or late they would be involved in serious difficulties with regard to the established Church. Through the force of education and example, as we have already seen, when they were at Oxford and in Georgia, they were among the strictest of strict Churchmen, and would have thought it almost a sin even to save a soul from hell, except in accordance with the rubric, and in the use of the Book of Common Prayer. They denied the validity of baptism when administered by men who had only received Presbyterian ordination ; for they thought that the laying on of a Bishop’s hands was essential to the ministerial character ; and that those who had only been ordained “ by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery,” were mere laymen,—though they might belong to Protestant national Churches, such as those of Scotland and Holland,—and could therefore perform no proper ministerial act. Greatly were they shocked when some of their own sons in the Gospel began to preach ; and they resolved at once to silence them by the strong hand of power. But in this they were overruled. They saw that God was with the men whom they charged to hold their peace. Their spirit was devout ; and their ministrations were sanctioned by the divine blessing, not in a few solitary instances merely, but in the actual conversion and salvation of multitudes. Hence the brothers were not only reconciled to this innovation, but defended it, and rejoiced in it, as a means which Christ him-

self had provided for extending his kingdom in the world : and they were the more satisfied, because the Preachers and their converts attended the religious services of the established Church. For a time it was not difficult to preserve this state of things, because the societies and Preachers were few in number, and were continually under the eye of the brothers, to whose judgment and authority every one paid the most profound deference.

But at length difficulties arose. The question of separation from the Church, and of the administration of the sacraments by the Preachers, was agitated, and caused great searchings of heart in various directions. The year 1755 was a sort of crisis in Methodism, because then a controversy on these subjects began, which was not finally settled until some years after the Founders of the system had ended their life and labours. In London and Bristol the Lord's supper was regularly administered by a Clergyman ; but in most other places both the Preachers and the societies were expected to attend this ordinance in their several parish churches. In many instances the Clergy who officiated there were not only destitute of piety, but were immoral in their lives ; and doubts arose, whether such men, notwithstanding their ordination, were true Ministers of Christ, and whether it was not a sin to encourage them in the performance of duties for which they were so manifestly destitute of the requisite qualifications. The Clergyman at Epworth, who repelled Mr. John Wesley from the Lord's table, and assaulted him before the whole congregation, was notoriously drunk at the time. In other cases the doctrine which was taught in the churches was deemed not only defective, but positively erroneous ; especially when justification by faith, and the work of the Holy Spirit, were peremptorily denied and opposed. Several of the Clergy were directly concerned in the instigation of riotous proceedings against the Methodists, by which their property was destroyed, and their lives were endangered ; and if the sufferers forgave these injuries, it was too much to expect that they would contentedly receive the memorials of the Saviour's death at the hands of men who had encouraged such outrages upon humanity and justice. If John Nelson could profitably receive the holy communion from the Minister who, by bearing false witness against him, had succeeded

in tearing him away from his family, and sending him into the army, every one had not John's meekness and strength of mind. Not a few of the Clergy absolutely refused to administer the Lord's supper to the Methodists. When these people approached the table of the Lord, they were singled out among the communicants, and denied the sacred emblems of their Redeemer's body and blood. This was the case, as we have seen, at Bristol, at Leeds, in Derbyshire, and other places; so that the Methodists were compelled either to receive the Lord's supper at the hands of their own Preachers, or in the Dissenting chapel, or to violate the command of the Lord, who has charged all his disciples to "eat of this bread, and drink of this cup." Great uneasiness therefore existed among the Preachers, and in several of the societies.

In this emergency the embarrassment of the Wesleys was increased by the fact, that the Preachers who were unfriendly to that strict union with the Church, which had been hitherto maintained, were generally the most pious and gifted of their brethren. At the head of this band was Joseph Cownley, whom Mr. John Wesley afterwards pronounced one of the best Preachers in England. Among them were also Edward and Charles Perronet, the two sons of the venerable Vicar of Shoreham; who were both educated men, and possessed of considerable talent, as is manifest from their publications, both in prose and verse. Their piety was indisputable. Of this class of Preachers also was Thomas Walsh. This very remarkable man was a native of Ireland, and was designed for the Romish priesthood; but having obtained a knowledge of the truth, he renounced the errors of Popery, and connected himself with the Methodist body. His application to study was intense and unremitting, and the fruits of his industry were surprising. Mr. John Wesley declared him to be the best Biblical scholar he ever knew. If he were questioned respecting any Hebrew or Greek word in holy Scripture, he would, after a short pause, specify how often it occurred in sacred writ, and its precise signification in each place. He preached with great fervour and energy, both in the Irish and English languages; and in prayer he was mighty and prevalent. This truly great and holy man enjoyed in a high degree the confidence of Mr. John Wesley, because of the wisdom of his counsels, and the integrity of his princi-

ples and life. The whole of these Preachers, and probably some others, generally absented themselves from the services of the established Church; and they occasionally administered the Lord's supper to the people who were like-minded with themselves, and also to one another.

This further innovation upon the order of the Church exceedingly distressed Mr. Charles Wesley, who had long been reconciled to the irregularity of lay-preaching; and his grief was not a little increased by an apprehension that his brother secretly encouraged these proceedings. He even suspected that these Preachers might have obtained ordination by the imposition of John's hands. For he knew that his brother was strongly attached to them; that he had serious doubts concerning many things connected with the established Church; and that he had by implication avowed his right to ordain: having many years ago published to the world his conviction, that, in the apostolic church, Bishops and Presbyters were of the same order. These apprehensions Charles disclosed in his correspondence with Walter Sellon, the Clergyman of Smisby, in Leicestershire. Sellon had formerly been a Methodist Preacher, and the Master of Kingswood School. On the recommendation of the Huntingdon family he had obtained episcopal ordination. As a Clergyman he was eminently zealous and useful, though not very regular in his efforts to convert and save souls. He retained a strong affection for his old friends, and enjoyed their entire confidence. Mr. Charles Wesley pressed this sensible and able man to write to his brother pointedly and strongly against the administration of the sacraments by the Methodist Preachers, and on the necessity of a close adherence to the Church. He also pressed him by all means to attend the next Conference, for the purpose of urging these points both upon Mr. John Wesley and the Preachers; pledging himself to obtain admission for him into that assembly. Mr. Sellon appears to have written to Mr. John Wesley on these subjects, and also to Charles Perronet; but we have no proof that he was present at the Conference. Probably his limited income, and his parochial duties, detained him at home. His living was known to be poor, and his labours severe. In the progress of his correspondence with Sellon, Mr. Charles Wesley confessed that his suspicions respecting

his brother were unfounded. No such countenance as he supposed had been given to the Preachers who thus acted upon the principles of separation. The following passages which occur in Mr. Charles Wesley's letters to his clerical friend at Smisby bear upon the subjects just mentioned :—

“ London, Dec. 14th [1754]. My dear Brother and Friend,—Write again, and spare not. My brother took no notice to me of your letter. Since the Melchizedekians have been taken in, I have been excluded his cabinet council. They know me too well, to trust him with me. He is come so far as to believe a separation quite lawful, only not yet expedient. They are indefatigable in urging him to go so far, that he may not be able to retreat. He may lay on hands, say they, without separating. I charge you keep it to yourself, that I stand in doubt of him : which I tell you, that you may pray for him the more earnestly, and write to him the more plainly.

“ In May our Conference is. You must be there, if alive.

“ We can hold it no longer, (the Methodist Preachers, I mean,) but must quickly divide to the right or left, the church or meeting.

“ I know none fitter for training up our young men than yourself, or John Jones. We must, among us, get the sound Preachers qualified for orders.

“ You are a poor writer of short-hand. Perhaps I may teach you better when we meet, on Dr. Byrom's condition, that you purchase a book when published. Whoever taught you your scraps was a thief and a robber.

“ My partner salutes you in increasing love. Many thousands, besides her, shall prosper, because they love our Jerusalem. Farewell in Christ.”

“ My dear Brother,—I have seen your honest, friendly letter to Charles Perronet ; for which I thank you, both in behalf of myself, and the Church of England.

“ In your fidelity to my old honoured mother, you are a man after my own heart. I always loved you, but never so much as now.

“ O pray for the peace of Jerusalem ! They shall prosper that love her. I know you wish her prosperity. You think upon her stones ; and it pitieth you to see her in the dust.

“ How unlike the spirit of poor Perronet, and his asso-

ciates! What a pity such spirits should have any influence over my brother! They are continually urging him to a separation; that is, to pull down all he has built, to put a sword in our enemies' hands, to destroy the work, scatter the flock, disgrace himself, and go out like the snuff of a candle.

"May I not desire it of you, as a debt you owe the Church, as well as him, to write him a full, close, plain transcript of your heart on the occasion? Charles Perronet, you know, has taken upon him to administer the sacrament, for a month together, to the Preachers, and twice to some of the people. Walsh and three others have followed his vile example. The consequence you see with open eyes. O that my brother did so too! Our worthy friend at Clifton* could not but believe my brother had laid on his hands, or they would not have dared to act thus. You have her thoughts in mine.

"I have heard your sincerity called in question, as if you ran with the hare, and held with the hounds. I do not believe a word of it, as this letter proves. Only let me caution you, not to communicate this to any one.

"You must make one at our Conference in Leeds, which will be in May. I will give you timely notice.

"Pray for us. I stand alone, as our Preachers imagine. Nevertheless the Lord stands by me. The Lord Jesus bless you and keep you unto that day."

"London, Feb. 4th, 1755. My dear Brother,—There is no danger of my countenancing them, but rather of my opposing them too fiercely. It is a pity a good cause should suffer by a warm advocate. If God gives me meekness, I shall, at the Conference, speak, and spare not. Till then it is best the matter should sleep, or we should make the delinquents desperate, and their associates among the Preachers hypocrites. My brother purposely holds his peace, that he may come to the bottom of them. Your letters, and some others wrote with the same honesty, have had the due effect on him. He has spoken as strongly, of late, in behalf of the Church of England, as I could wish; and everywhere declares he never intends to leave her. This has made the Melchizedekians draw in their horns, and drop their design. We must know the heart of every Preacher; and give them

* Lady Huntingdon.

their choice of the church or the meeting. The wound can no longer be healed slightly. Those who are disposed to separate had best do it while we are yet alive.

“It seems not proper to show my brother your last to me. Write to him again, and urge it upon his conscience, whether he is not bound to prevent a separation, both before and after his death; whether, in order to this, he should not take the utmost pains to settle the Preachers, discharging those who are irreclaimable, and never receiving another without this previous condition, that he will never leave the Church.

“He is writing an excellent treatise on the question, whether it is expedient to separate from the Church of England; which he talks of printing.

“Be very mild and loving in your next, lest he should still say, the separatists show a better spirit than their opposers. You may honestly suppose him now of our mind.

“I will answer for your admission to the Conference at Leeds in the beginning of May.

“My brother says his book will be out next summer. I will allow him till next winter.

“Is not Nicholas Norton under the influence of Charles Perronet?

“Poor Meriton is dead: therefore I say nothing of him.

“John Jones will thank you for a title.

“William Prior I suppose you know is ordained; without learning, interest, or aught but Providence to recommend him.

“What are you doing in your part of the vineyard? and how does the work prosper? Write largely, and often.

“The Lord of the harvest is thrusting out labourers in divers places. Mr. Romaine, Venn, Dodd, Jones, and others here, are much blessed. Pray for them, as well as us. The Lord be your strength. Farewell in Christ.

“Robert Windsor is a pillar of our Church.”

These letters are particularly valuable, not only as exhibiting the state of feeling among the Methodist Preachers in those times, but for the light which they shed upon Mr. Charles Wesley's character. With the real difficulties of the case he did not attempt to grapple. He does not show how the scruples of such men as Cownley, Walsh, and the Perro-nets, could be removed; nor how the spiritual wants of the

societies were to be met in those places where they were repelled from the table of the Lord. Such was his impetuosity, that he could see nothing in the scruples of these men but pride ; and he was resolved to force all the people to an attendance upon their several churches, whatever they might hear there, and though they went with the certainty of being driven from the holy communion. Such a course was not suited to the occasion. The persons concerned were not children, either in years, understanding, or piety. They were rebuked, but not convinced ; and left to utter their complaints in all directions. To treat them in this manner was only to restrain the evil for a time. It was not removed. Mr. John Wesley pursued a different course. He also was anxious to preserve the people and Preachers in communion with the established Church ; but he would not, even for the attainment of this object, dismiss from the itinerant ministry men of whose uprightness, piety, and usefulness he had the fullest evidence. Nor would he deal harshly with men whom he thought to be in error, when he saw that conscience was concerned.

As one means of preserving the Methodists in union with the Church, Mr. Charles Wesley was anxious to get the best and ablest of the Preachers prepared for holy orders, and then ordained by the Bishops ; and he thought that Mr. Sellon and John Jones might be advantageously employed in the work of their education. Jones, who had belonged to the medical profession, was a man of learning, and very useful as an Itinerant Preacher. He was treated with great confidence by the brothers, being a man of extraordinary sobriety of judgment. Charles, it will be observed, bespeaks for him a title to orders, that he might be invested with the clerical character. At that time he did not succeed ; but afterwards Jones was episcopally ordained, and became a parochial Minister, as did a few others of his brethren. Their itinerancy was then at an end ; and the design of Methodist preaching, to spread Christian holiness all over the land, was proportionably defeated. Mr. John Wesley viewed these subjects, not as a theorist, but as a practical man. All feeling of personal taste and prejudice, and all forms of ecclesiastical order, he subordinated to the higher object of reforming the nation, by turning the people from sin to holiness.

Mr. Charles Wesley is generally happy in the application of epithets. Whether he intends to praise or blame, the names which he gives to the parties whom he designs to characterize are usually appropriate and striking. But here his shrewdness and tact forsake him. He assumes that the Clergy of the established Church were Priests after the order of Aaron ; and he calls the Methodist Preachers “ Melchizedekians,” to denote their inferiority. They were not in the “ succession ;” as Melchizedek was “ without father, without mother, without descent.” But when he used the name of Melchizedek for such a purpose, he did not “ consider how great this man was.” Melchizedek was “ King of righteousness,” and “ King of peace,” as well as “ Priest of the most high God ;” and, as the inspired author of the Epistle to the Hebrews shows, was vastly superior to Aaron, and the whole tribe of Levi ; inasmuch as Levi himself, in the person of Abraham, paid tithes to this Priest of the kingly order, who blessed the Patriarch of the whole Jewish nation : “ and without all contradiction, the less is blessed of the better.” Joseph Cownley, Thomas Walsh, and the Perronets, however disposed to magnify their office, as itinerant Evangelists, would hardly have aspired to such a distinction as this honourable title properly denotes.

The time of the Conference at length drew near, when the claims of these “ Melchizedekians” were to be heard and canvassed. Mr. Charles Wesley, as the impassioned and determined advocate of Churchmanship, repaired to Leeds, whence he addressed the following letter to his wife :—

“ Leeds, April 29th. To my dearly beloved Partner,—
Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord !

“ You thought it long till you heard from me again. I made such short stages, (as much to save my horse as myself,) that I did not reach this place till yesterday. At Birmingham, Sheffield, Barley-hall, and Leeds, are many kind inquirers after you : too many to name. I told them my hopes of your continued welfare. Their prayers for you will come back in the time of need. Moderate travelling I find good for me, having never had better health since you knew me. I look every post for a good account of my Sally. This evening I expect to find my brother at Birstal. I pity

his poor wife, if now upon the road. There she is likely to stick, till the warm weather comes. The roads are almost impassable for wheels.

“I am going to breakfast with Miss Norton, who is as far from the spirit of my *Best Friend* * as east from west. What shall you and I do to love her better? ‘Love your enemies,’ is with man impossible: but is anything too hard for God? I fear you do not constantly pray for her. I must pray, or sink—into the spirit of revenge.

“Miss Norton is very much at your service, but flies from her house before the face of my sister. She retreats to Wakefield, before the Conference, for an obvious reason.

“H. Thornton and his wife, &c., &c., &c., send cordial greetings, and poor old declining Mrs. Hutchinson. I have been crying in the chamber, whence my J. Hutchinson ascended. My heart is full of him; and I miss him every moment. But he is at rest.

“When did our Clifton friends leave you? Have you looked out for lodgings first, and by and by for a house, for my dear George? Mr. James can assist you in the latter, but very privately. My friend must not be named.

“Are you much in private prayer? Do you ever read my hymns for your condition? I cannot doubt your coming safely through, if we continue instant in prayer. Adieu!”

A few things in this letter call for remark. The affecting reference to J. Hutchinson proves the strength of the writer’s affection for his late friend, who had now been dead nearly twelve months. It will be recollected that he accompanied Mr. Charles Wesley from Bristol to London, in the latter end of the year 1753, when Mr. John Wesley was thought to be dying. At that time he was in a backsliding state, and had deeply fallen from God. He died at Leeds on the 23d of July following; and in the room where he expired Mr. Charles Wesley wept at the remembrance of him. When he was near his end Mr. Charles Wesley wrote a hymn, commending him to the divine mercy, and praying for the recovery of his forfeited peace and holiness. The request was granted. Before he yielded up his spirit, his backslidings

* Mrs. John Wesley.

were healed, and he was able to testify of the goodness of God to his soul. Two hymns on the occasion of his happy death, Mr. Charles Wesley afterwards published.

The “dear George,” here mentioned, was the Rev. George Stonehouse, formerly Vicar of Islington, whose Curate Mr. Charles Wesley was, till driven away by the Churchwardens. Having imbibed the views of the Moravians, he resigned his vicarage, and went to live at Dornford, near Woodstock, in Oxfordshire. He was now a widower, and had cast his eye upon “Molly Stafford,” whom he thought suitable to be his second wife. About the middle of this month he visited Bristol, and on his return wrote to Mrs. Charles Wesley, requesting her to give him her opinion concerning this good woman. It was the misfortune of this eccentric man to be possessed of an independent fortune. Had he been poor, he would, in all probability, have retained his living at Islington, and remained an efficient Minister of Christ to the end of his life. His property supplied him with the means of following his whims and caprice. In another letter to his wife, which was written about this time, Mr. Charles Wesley says, “George Stonehouse has been a great comfort to me already. My words have not been lost upon him. He is worth all the pains we can bestow upon him. I have made a convert of my brother towards him: for why? My sister was out of the way.”

From Leeds Mr. Charles Wesley went to Birstal, where he met his brother by appointment, in the afternoon of Monday, April 28th. Here they remained together for several days, examining, with the greatest care, the claims of the established Church on the one hand, and of Dissent on the other, that they might be fully prepared for the discussion of the question of separation at the Conference, which was just at hand. In reference to this interview, Mr. John Wesley says, in his Journal,—

“We began reading together, ‘A Gentleman’s Reasons for his Dissent from the Church of England.’ It is an elaborate and lively tract, and contains the strength of the cause: but it did not yield us one proof that it is lawful for us (much less our duty) to separate from it. In how different a spirit does this man write from honest Richard Baxter! The one dipping, as it were, his pen in tears; the other, in

vinegar and gall. Surely one page of that loving, serious Christian weighs more than volumes of this bitter, sarcastic jester."

Mr. Charles Wesley's letters to his wife throw further light upon this subject, at the same time that they show a tender regard for her welfare. She was now in Bristol, and approaching the hour of nature's peril and sorrow. He says,—

"My time is chiefly spent with my brother, at Birstal, in reading over the Dissenter's book. He found and showed me many flaws in his arguments against the Church, which he interweaves and answers in his excellent treatise on that question, whether it be expedient to separate from the Church of England? Mr. Grimshaw (whom the separatists claimed for their own) designed coming to the Conference, only to take his leave of us, if we did of the Church. All the Preachers in the north are unanimous for it. Satan has done his worst, and confirmed us in our calling.

"I preach constantly, to save my brother; and the word has free course. Honest John Nelson, William Shent, and forty more, salute and, what is better, pray for you. Come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Farewell."

The Conference met at Leeds, according to appointment, on the 6th of May. Sixty-three Preachers were present. The reason for so large an attendance was, that the relation of the Methodists to the Church might be fully considered, and that, as much as possible, a uniformity of principle and action might be secured. Mr. John Wesley says, "The point on which we desired all the Preachers to speak their minds at large was, whether we ought to separate from the Church. Whatever was advanced, on one side or the other, was seriously and calmly considered; and on the third day we were all fully agreed in that general conclusion, that, whether it was lawful or not, it was no ways expedient."

In this important and protracted discussion, Mr. John and Charles Wesley expressed their minds freely and strongly; and every one was invited to declare his views without restraint. Mr. Walsh and his friends engaged to desist from the administration of the Lord's supper; such was their deference to the judgment of their brethren, and especially to

the Wesleys, who were over them in the Lord. With this general conclusion Mr. John Wesley appears to have been satisfied. The practical object which he had in view was gained; and he would not interfere with the workings of private conscience, except in the way of reasoning and persuasion. Not so his more ardent brother. Charles perceived that many of the Preachers were unconvinced, so that future agitations would in all probability arise, and obstruct the harmony which for the present was established. The permanent maintenance of strict Churchmanship he saw to be more than questionable. Early, therefore, in the morning of the day after the debate was closed in the Conference, he left Leeds, without even informing his brother of his intention, and returned to London, taking Rotherham, Sheffield, Birmingham, and other places in his way. From Rotherham he thus addressed his wife:—

“ I snatch a few moments, before the congregation comes, to salute my dearest Sally in the love that never faileth. To-morrow night, or Sunday morning, I hope to call on my Lady. Last Saturday afternoon, after my brother and I had settled everything in the four preceding days, on my way to Wakefield I met—my good angel and sister. I have done her honour before the people, and behaved, though I say it, very much like a gentleman: only that I took French leave this morning; that is, left Leeds without telling either her, or her husband. He will follow me quickly with a letter; but I am hardened to causeless reproofs.

“ I trust my Sally is more than patient of my absence. You should rejoice that my Lord continues to use me. May his presence make you infinite amends!

“ Miss Norton sends her respects. She loves none of the Methodists, but Mr. Edwards—and me.

“ I left the brethren in Conference; yet I do not repent my trouble. You will be content to wait a little for particulars. All agreed not to separate: so the wound is healed—slightly. Yet some good news I may bring you from Leeds, if we live a month longer.

“ My love to Sarah Jones. Her husband is detained by my brother, but will overtake me, I hope, at Birmingham. I want to hear that your sisters are both with you. If not, it is your own fault, or theirs. Three weeks I am fast at

London; then we may meet, all four of us, in Charles-street, if the Lord permit.

“On Wednesday night I was assisted in preaching in a wonderful manner. The subject was, ‘My grace is sufficient for thee.’ The Lord be your peace and strength! Farewell.

“We have had our Lord’s presence, according to his promise. I have delivered my own soul in this society, exhorting them to continue steadfast in fellowship with the Church of England. The same exhortation I hope to leave with every society throughout the land. On such an occasion you will cheerfully spare me. Good night.”

“Birmingham, May 12th. You shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. My dearest Sally cannot but be sometimes afraid; yet put your trust in the Lord, who hath delivered, and will deliver.

“I am just come hither from Donnington, where I passed yesterday most agreeably. Our friend’s* prayers you are always sure of, and they avail much.

“Your two last I hope to find time for answering at Dornford, which I expect to see on Wednesday.

“We draw nearer and nearer, and shall soon be intimately one, and eternally swallowed up in divine love. Once more, my dearest partner, look up. Farewell.”

On the 28th of May he wrote from London to the following effect:—“I am ready to wish you may not have shown my last to Mrs. Jones and Vigor. They will fear where no fear is, as if I was running away outright. But my heart is more closely united to the true Methodists than ever.

“Beck must recover her music: must positively, or not look me in the face. It lies upon you to drag her to the harpsichord, and tie her down in her chair.

“I have great encouragement in my labours.

“Numberless are my Sally’s well-wishers: and their prayers cannot but prevail. George Whitefield returns your love with interest.

“Wednesday afternoon. I write from George Stonehouse’s other lodgings, whence we adjourn to Mr. Waller’s. My heart is in haste to drag my body after it to Bristol. I have told George, I shall not wait for him. He says he will not

* Lady Huntingdon.

be detained, but set out with me on Monday se'nnight. Our first day's stage is to Wycomb; the second to Dornford, where I rest my beast; on Friday or Saturday following I trust the Lord will bring us together."

"London, May 31st. Dearest Sally,—I count the days between us, and look towards Charles-street sleeping and waking. This evening I hope will bring sister Davis safe to Bristol. I have sent you a pound of tea, and half a pound to Sarah Jones, which I beg her to accept. Be sure, refuse her money. If you want any more, tell me so in your next.

"Lady Huntingdon I expect at Clifton about the middle or end of July.

"On Thursday I read my Epistle a second time to a crowded audience, and yesterday at the watch-night. Seven hundred are sent by this day's carrier.

"George and I spent the morning at Mrs. Grinfield's, who sends her love and prayers after you. We dined at Mr. Waller's. The Lord preserve my dearest Sally!"

The "Epistle" which is here mentioned, as having been read to a "crowded audience," at a watch-night, was a small pamphlet, in verse, which Mr. Charles Wesley put to press immediately after his return from the Conference, under the title of "An Epistle to the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, by Charles Wesley, Presbyter of the Church of England." It is an earnest and spirited composition, written in the fulness of the author's heart, declarative of his yearning affection for the established Church, and of his determination to labour and die in her service. He describes, in affecting terms, her fallen condition, both with regard to her ministry, and the general practice of her children; he freely censures what he conceives to be wrong in her, especially her worldliness; and expresses his earnest hope that the time was come for the recovery of her lost spirituality. Not the least interesting part of this production is the writer's avowal of unalterable friendship for his brother, and his conviction of his brother's fidelity, and oneness of heart with himself. This very interesting document is given entire in the Appendix of this volume, and will amply reward the labour of a perusal. Nothing that Charles Wesley ever wrote exhibits more distinctly the peculiarities of his mind. The probability is, that he composed it as he travelled on horseback, from Leeds

to London, with the three days' debate in the Conference in his recollection, and all the feelings connected with that debate still vivid and strong. In such a state of mental excitement, his thoughts naturally assumed the poetic form. Four thousand copies of the tract were printed and immediately put into circulation.*

While Mr. Charles Wesley was in this state of anxiety respecting Methodism and the Church, his brother endeavoured to moderate his zeal for outward conformity, and give him more practical views of their calling. Two of his letters, addressed to Charles upon this occasion, have been preserved, and show the state of John's mind in reference to the questions at issue. He thus speaks, under the date of June 20th, 1755 :—

“Do not you understand that they all promised by Thomas Walsh, not to administer, even among themselves? I think that a huge point given up ; perhaps more than they could give up with a clear conscience.

“They showed an excellent spirit in this very thing. Likewise when I (not to say you) spoke once and again,

* As a matter of curiosity, the printer's bill is subjoined. It shows the price of paper and of work in those times ; and states a fact which was honourable to Mr. Charles Wesley's character.

“ The Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley

Dr. to Wm. Strahan.

	£	s.	d.
Printing a Letter to Mr. Wesley, one sheet, No. 3,000	2	2	0
For six reams fine demy paper for Do.	4	4	0
	£6	6	0

Received May 28, 1755, the contents in full,
WILL. STRAHAN.

Printing 1,000 more of Do.	0	14	0
Two reams of paper for Do.	1	8	0
Balance of an old account forgot by me, but remembered by Mr. Wesley	1	14	0
	£3	16	0

Received May 31, 1755, of the Rev. Mr. Charles Wesley,
the contents of the above bill, in full of all demands,
WILL. STRAHAN.”

spoke *satis pro imperio*,* when I reflected on their answers, I admired their spirit, and was ashamed of my own.

“The practical conclusion was, not to separate from the Church. Did we not all agree in this? Surely either you or I must have been asleep, or we could not differ so widely in a matter of fact.

“Here is Charles Perronet raving, because his friends have given up all; and Charles Wesley, because they have given up nothing; and I, in the midst, staring and wondering both at one and the other.

“I do not want to do anything more, unless I could bring them over to my opinion; and I am not in haste for that.

“Cyprian is a terrible witness of the sense of the then church;† for he speaks it not as his own private sense, but an incontestable allowed rule: and by *Antistes* there, I really believe he means the Minister of a parish. That pinches me. Nevertheless, I think with you, till I get more light; though I should be hard set to defend myself against a skilful adversary. When I am convinced it is my duty, I will follow Cyprian’s advice. The same say you, and no more. I do not fluctuate yet; but I cannot answer the arguments on that side of the question. Joseph Cownley says, ‘For such and such reasons, I dare not hear a drunkard preach, or read prayers.’ I answer, I dare: but I cannot answer his reasons.”

Eight days after the date of this letter, Mr. John Wesley again wrote to his brother on the same subject. “Wherever I have been in England,” says he, “the societies are far more firmly and rationally attached to the Church than ever they were before. I have no fear about this matter. I only fear the Preachers’ or the people’s leaving, not the Church, but the love of God, and inward or outward holiness. To this I press them forward continually. I dare not, in conscience, spend my time and strength on externals. If, as my Lady says, all outward Establishments are Babel, so is this Estab-

* “With sufficient authority.”

† The passage in Cyprian to which allusion is here made, Mr. Wesley had cited in a former letter. It is, *Populus a scelerato Antistite separare se debet*. “It is the duty of the people to separate themselves from a wicked Bishop.”

lishment. Let it stand for me. I neither set it up, nor pull it down. But let you and I build up the city of God.

“Thomas Walsh (I will declare it on the house-top) has given me all the satisfaction I desire, and all that an honest man could give. I love, admire, and honour him ; and wish we had six Preachers in all England of his spirit. But enough of this. Let us draw the saw no longer, but use all our talents to promote the mind that was in Christ.

“We have not one Preacher who either proposed, or desires, or designs (that I know) to separate from the Church at all. Their principles in this single point of ordination I do not approve : but I pray for more and more of their spirit (in general) and practice.

“Driving may make me fluctuate ; though I do not yet.”

In several of his letters, Mr. Charles Wesley speaks in strong terms of commendation of a treatise against separation from the Church, which his brother was preparing for the press. This treatise was submitted to the friendly inspection of the Rev. Samuel Walker, the Minister of Truro, in Cornwall : a wise and holy man, who was very useful in his own parish, and avoided the irregularities in which the Wesleys, Mr. Grimshaw, Meriton, Sellon, and a few other Clergymen, felt it their duty to indulge. Mr. Walker advised that the treatise should not be printed. He thought, that, in all probability, it would call forth rejoinders, and provoke a controversy from which the Church was likely to derive injury rather than benefit. The fact is, Mr. Wesley acknowledged the justice of many of the objections which Dissenters urged against the spiritual Courts, some parts of the Liturgy and the Canons, and the character of too many of the Clergy ; and his object was, to show that these objections, though founded in truth, and therefore possessing great force, did not form a sufficient ground for separation. The premises, however, being to a considerable extent admitted, Mr. Walker was apprehensive that other persons, not having that bias in favour of the Church which swayed his judgment and that of the Wesleys, would draw an opposite conclusion. He therefore deprecated the agitation of the questions thus mooted. His advice was kindly taken, and acted upon ; so that the treatise was suppressed, and has remained in manuscript to

this day, though some parts of it have been published in a different form. That Mr. Charles Wesley, with all his admiration of the Church, (and that admiration was both profound and conscientious,) concurred with his brother in the views which he entertained respecting her blemishes and defects, is evident from various passages in the poetical "Epistle" which he published at this time.

Upon this occasion, both the Wesleys entered into a correspondence with Mr. Walker, on the question of preserving the Methodists in union with the established Church. He advised the extinction of itinerant preaching, and of the public ministrations of unordained men. To secure this, he recommended that the ablest and best-qualified Preachers should be prepared for holy orders, and fixed in parishes; that those who disapproved of the Church should be dismissed; and the rest employed in taking care of the societies, without preaching at all. The judgment of Mr. Adam, of Wintringham, was also requested: but he was less liberal than even Mr. Walker; and laid down principles which would at once have silenced every unordained Preacher, and broken up all the societies, without any regard for private conscience, and the spiritual destitution which everywhere prevailed. Mr. Charles Wesley was favourable to the ordination and settlement of the Preachers; for he was full of hope, that pious Clergymen would be everywhere raised up to carry on the revival of religion which was so auspiciously begun. This correspondence led to no practical result. The people were everywhere perishing for lack of knowledge; and Mr. John Wesley could not impose silence upon men whom he believed God Himself had raised up, to assist in reforming the nation. Thousands of ignorant and profligate people, in all parts of the land, were by the instrumentality of these men turned to Christ, and made upright and holy. A ministry episcopally regular, producing similar effects, he would have greatly preferred, had it pleased God to raise it up; but he justly thought that it was better to save the people irregularly, than suffer them to die in their sins. By this principle he was resolved to abide, though all his clerical brethren should frown upon him, and his own familiar friend throw discouragements in his way. Upon his firmness at this time, under God, depended the continuance of that

system of itinerant preaching from which the nation and the world have derived the most substantial advantages.

Mr. Walker and Mr. Adam gave such advice as they thought best adapted to the maintenance of church-order, without duly considering the spiritual wants of the nation: Mr. Wesley kept steadily in view the higher object of turning ungodly men to righteousness; regarding the most perfect ecclesiastical discipline (though highly important and desirable in its place) as nothing more than a means to an end. Mr. Edwin Sidney, in his Life of Mr. Walker, speaks of Mr. Wesley as greatly inferior to that excellent man in sound judgment and practical wisdom. Perhaps his opinion may be somewhat modified when he views the subject of their correspondence in the light which eternity will shed upon it. In that light it will be more distinctly seen whether or not the everlasting interests of redeemed men ought to be sacrificed to an external uniformity, which the holy Scriptures nowhere enjoin as matter of absolute duty.

That Mr. John Wesley attached less importance to his union with the Church, than to the spread of true religion in the country by means of itinerant preaching, he distinctly avows in the following letter to his brother, which bears the date of June 23d, 1755. The youth mentioned in the first paragraph was their nephew, of whose support and education they had taken the charge, now that he was abandoned by his apostate father.

“A gentleman, who keeps an academy at Brompton, offers to take Westley Hall for nothing, to teach him the ancient and modern tongues; and when he has learned them, to give him thirty pounds a year, and his board, if he will stay to assist him. His mother thinks (and I cannot say much to the contrary) that such an offer is not to be slighted. Send us your judgment upon the matter as soon as possible.

“I am *proximus ardet Ucalegon!* The good Bishop of London has excommunicated Mr. Gardiner for preaching without a licence. It is probable the point will now be determined concerning the Church. For if we must either *dissent*, or *be silent*, *actum est!* We have no time to trifle!”

In a letter written a few weeks afterwards, he adds, “You are by no means free from temptation. You are as positive as if you had never seen either Stillingfleet or Baxter. I am

very calm and cool, determining nothing, but to do nothing rashly. Now which is more in the temptation? To my thought, you are in it, and over head and ears. Your gross bigotry lies here, in putting a man on a level with an adulterer, because he differs from you as to church government. What miserable confounding the degrees of good and evil is this !”

At this time Mr. John Wesley requested his brother to visit the societies in Cornwall; but this service he declined, for reasons which do not appear. He continued his ministry, however, in London and the neighbourhood with undiminished fidelity and zeal. We cannot give a connected detail of his labours during the summer and autumn of the year 1755; but the following concise extracts from his letters to his wife will show the spirit by which he was actuated, and the blessing which attended his word. They also contain some curious and interesting notices concerning contemporary events and characters. Mr. John Wesley had undertaken the journey to Cornwall, but was not accompanied by his fretful and murmuring wife. Charles Perronet was in London, and had charge of the works which Mr. John Wesley was passing through the press.

The subjoined letter was franked by Lord Fortesque, and addressed to Mrs. Wesley at Dornford, where she was on a visit to Mr. Stonehouse, the ex-Vicar of Islington, and his pious sister:—“Sept. 13th. How fares my dearest Sally? and her companions, and host, and hostess? I think it long since I saw you; but it must be longer still before we meet again. On Thursday I went to bed at seven, and slept away my headache. Yesterday I visited Islington and the Green. All vacant hours I employ in transcribing my own important history. To-morrow I preach for the first time. On Monday I take horse for Canterbury. I have just received a warm epistle from my sworn friend the Colonel. It would do you good to hear how tenderly he writes of you.

“How does your *Rector* perform? If he will not be your chaplain at night, I must desire and insist on you, Beck, or Suky’s praying together, both morning and evening. Speak to this in your next; and rejoice me by telling me it is done.

“The people here had taken it into their heads, that I should never come to them again. Had it been so, many of

our oldest and best children would have followed me to Bristol, or America: and such as could not, would have withdrawn from the society.

“Sunday afternoon. Such a number of communicants I have not seen for months past. I was much assisted in preaching on, ‘The Spirit and the bride say, Come,’ &c. It is plain my work is not yet over. The congregation were almost all in tears. We made intercession at the sacrament,—or rather the Spirit for us, and for all who did run well, especially the first labourers. I only wanted you to be a partaker.

“I called two minutes before preaching on Mrs. Wesley, at the Foundery; and in *all that time* had not one quarrel. My subject was, ‘He that testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen, even so. Come, Lord Jesus.’ The Foundery was never fuller; and the word never more effectual.

“Monday morning, four o’clock. I took my leave of Mr. Lloyd, setting out for Derby, and I for Canterbury. Charles Perronet attended me to Greenwich, where I breakfasted with his mother and sister. We have had much talk together. I took off the burden I had laid on him by my late letters; and really believe they did him service. He thanked me; asked my pardon; and has been in high spirits ever since.

“I crept on, singing, or making hymns, till I got unawares to Canterbury. Mrs. Galatin came to welcome me immediately, and Mr. Phené, Edward Perronet, &c. They all require you. I too should be glad to have you always at my elbow; or to spend the winter with you betwixt St. Ann’s, London, and Bristol. But I dare not let loose my wishes, or choose for myself, till the will of Providence appears. Our first thing temporal is to get out of debt; which is impracticable, if we kept house the approaching winter. To-morrow I go to Margate; and should willingly bestow a fortnight upon my crazy carcass; but I must officiate at Spitalfields on Sunday next.

“Tuesday afternoon. I have just seen the King, who looks quite hearty.

“I dined with Major Galatin, who sends his love, and desires with his wife to see you.

“It is good for me to be here, or wherever the Lord finds

me employment. I commend you all to the grace of our Lord Jesus. Farewell ! ”

The letter concludes with the following hymn, which refers to the case of Mr. Stonehouse ; who, by imbibing the principles of an Antinomian Quietism, had been led to renounce the Church of England, and the ministry which he once efficiently exercised within her pale. Mrs. Wesley was probably expected to place it in his hands.

O thou whose pitying love relieves
The trav'ler fallen among thieves,
Stripp'd, wounded, and half-dead ;
To all the life of faith restore
My friend, who needs thy aid the more,
The less he asks thy aid.

Caught by the men who steal for God,
The fiends in hunting souls employ'd,
Too long he slumb'ring lay :
But thou hast shared the hunters' spoils,
Dissolved the charm, and burst the toils,
And claim'd the lawful prey.

Yet still, unconscious of its wound,
His spirit is not quite unbound,
From *all* delusion free :
The thieves have left their prey behind,
Naked, insensible, and blind,
And destitute of thee.

Robb'd in that dark, satanic hour,
Of all his ministerial power,
The man who ran so well :
His work, alas ! hath suffer'd loss ;
He is not, Lord, what once he was,
A flame of heavenly zeal.

A watchman in our Church he *was*,
Exceeding jealous for thy cause,
And for thy glorious name,
A chosen instrument of heaven
To pluck poor souls, by grace forgiven,
From the eternal flame.

Raised up by thee, he seem'd to stand,
Protector of a guilty land ;
Our hopes were built on him,
As equal to the righteous ten,
As planted in the gap, between,
Our Sodom to redeem.

How is the fervent zeal grown cold,
 The wine with water mix'd, the gold
 With nature's base allay !
 How hath thy messenger denied
 His heavenly call, and turn'd aside,
 And cast his sword away !

But thou canst yet his zeal revive,
 Canst stir him up to fight, and strive,
 As in those happy days,
 To prove thy good and perfect will,
 To own, and zealously fulfil,
 The counsels of thy grace.

O wouldst thou in this gracious hour
 Renew, and give him back his power,
 His wisdom from above ;
 His simple faith, and tender fear,
 His filial piety for HER
 Whom more than life I love.

O might my dearest charge be his !
 My ceaseless prayer for Zion's peace,
 Now let it answer'd be !
 Shepherd Divine, (I ask no more,)
 This Pastor to our Church restore,
 And take my soul to thee !

“Sept. 22d. You see my friend is very tractable. Deal gently ; and he may resume his office by and by, and administer the sacrament and word to us and the people. Love will do more than argument, and prayer most of all. We must pray him back to our Church and arms. Speak every thing that is kind and grateful for me to my dear George, and his most agreeable sister.

“On Wednesday last I drove Mr. Lepine to Margate, over a delightful bowling-green, as you will allow by and by. Dudy Perronet was more rejoiced at the sight of me than I can tell you. For above two hours she walked about, to show me the country, the cliffs, the machines for bathing. She is risen like Venus from the sea, so healthy and handsome, you would scarcely know her again.

“I regretted my notice for officiating at Spitalfields, which alone hindered my bestowing a fortnight on my scurvy carcass. Nothing but the *cure* of all evils will prevent my bathing there next season. You would bear me company,

if you were not afraid of losing your rheumatism. Multitudes wash away your complaint with the salt water.

“ We returned by tea-time to the Major’s. I read prayers and preached at our chapel ; and could hardly resist their importunity for a promise of my speedy return ; which I had surely given, had my health been my first concern. Thursday, I took my leave with a comfortable sacrament. Mrs. Galatin, Miss Bradshaw, Mrs. Symonds, and others, accompanied me to the farmer’s,* as usual, where we prayed and parted.

“ Charles was my companion to Chatham. I preached there at night, and prayed in the morning. Friday. My comrade opened all his great designs to me on the road. He is quite happy in the recovery of what he never lost,—my hearty good-will towards him, and his family.

“ We dined with them at Deptford. His father, mother, and sisters, attended my preaching. Our room was crowded. With great enlargement I explained the testimony of Jesus, and answer of his church : ‘ Surely I come quickly. Amen, even so. Come, Lord Jesus.’ The poor people were overjoyed to see and hear me once more. It is four years since I preached there last.

“ Saturday was all swallowed up in transcribing my journal. At eight in the evening I met the people crowding to our lecture at the Foundery. The meeting of the penitents it was called. Now all sorts come, whether in the society or out of it.

“ Sunday, Sept. 21st. The congregation at Spitalfields were, I had almost said, too many for me. Two hours were all employed with the communicants. The greatest number of them I ever remember. The spirit of supplication was poured out, which renewed my strength of body. I took coach for my brother Wright’s, whom I found, with surprise, on a sick, perhaps a death, bed. He is struck down by the dead palsy ; longed, above all things, for my coming ; rejoiced and wept to see me. His stubborn heart was much softened by the approach of death. Now he is a poor sinner indeed, full of horror and self-condemnation, yet not without hope of mercy.

* Mr. Perronet had a farm in the neighbourhood of Canterbury, which was managed by a confidential servant.

“I read prayers at the chapel, and preached on Mary’s good part. Had you seen us together, you would not fear my suddenly parting from this loving people. I met the society, and strongly exhorted them to the obedience of faith. I prayed again with my poor penitent, and left him a little more easy and composed.

“I went to bed at the chapel-house, but could not sleep. I rose at twelve, and lay down again, till a messenger called me between one and two to my brother. He told me he was dying; that his feet were dead already; he was perfectly sensible; told me before his wife* how he had settled his affairs (not enough to her advantage, I think); expressed a good hope and earnest desires for one, one only thing; wished for the voice of a trumpet, to warn all mankind not to walk in the paths wherein he had walked. He would make me a witness of his reconciliation with his wife; and said he expected to die at four or five.

“I spoke comfortably to him of Jesus our atonement, our peace, our hope. I prayed with free access (as we did last night in the society); saw no symptoms of immediate death, yet would not lessen his apprehension of it. I waited with Mr. Brogden for Dr. Ross’s coming: who came at last, and ordered him more blisters on his legs, &c. I preached at five to a numerous congregation, and prayed with confidence for a Christless dying sinner. I slept till eight; and prayed with him then a little better; yet more sorrowful and contrite. I breakfasted with Mrs. Jaques, and came hither to converse with my own Sally.†

“I carried my sister Hall to dine with Mrs. Webb, and thence rode to Little-Chelsea, to visit brother Cowper in a madhouse. His madness is, if such there be, diabolical. He has not spoken for these four months. But the deaf and dumb devil was disturbed by our prayers, and forced to say,

* This was Wright’s second wife. His first had for some years been sleeping in her “quiet grave,” into which she had long desired to descend, as the place

“Where broken hearts can bleed no more.”

It would appear from these notices that he was unkind to them both.

† This letter was written in the house which was connected with the chapel in West-street, Seven-Dials. It was near Frith-street, Soho, the residence of his brother Wright, and the place where his sister Mehetabel a few years before died in the Lord.

‘Charles, thou art a Priest of Baal. I do not receive thee.’ I told him, ‘Satan, thou art a liar, and knowest I am a Priest of God, and servant of Jesus Christ; and this poor soul shall know it, when thou art cast out by our prayers.’ This you may keep to yourself. I shall never print it in my journal.

“After preaching at the chapel, I obeyed a summons from Mrs. Rich, and found her with our friends from the hill. Much talk we had of you. The particulars expect in my next. Good night.”

The notice which Mr. Charles Wesley gives of his visit to a maniac at Chelsea, is curious and characteristic. Unlike his brother, he was strongly inclined to scepticism on the subject of modern diabolical possessions; and he here casts a slur upon the account of such cases which John had inserted in his printed Journal. Yet here he expresses a concurrence in his brother’s opinion, but intimates that he would not publish it to the world. In this he shows more reserve, but less singleness of mind, than his brother usually exhibited. John did not hesitate openly to declare the honest convictions of his heart, whatever the world might think of his views, and of the facts to which they related.

Towards the close of the year 1755, two marriages were about to take place, in which Mr. Charles Wesley took a lively interest, and in which he was engaged to officiate. One was that of George Stonehouse, at Dornford; and the other that of Miss Degge, a very intelligent and pious lady, and an intimate and esteemed friend, who had promised her hand to a nobleman belonging to the Rutland family. She was the niece of Mrs. Gumley, the lady of the Colonel of that name. Mr. Charles Wesley was hence induced to think of his own marriage; of the providential steps which led to it, and the results to which it had given rise. The consequence was a feeling of lively gratitude to God, and to all the parties concerned, which he thus expressed in a letter to his wife, accompanied by an account of the terrible earthquake which had just occurred at Lisbon:—

“In reading over the passages of *our* history,” says he, “you cannot think what love I feel towards every one of *our* family. Your mother, sister, father, cousins, nurse, so behaved as to deserve my esteem and love during life. I look back with delight on every step, every circumstance, in

that whole design of providential love. I rejoice with grateful joy at our blessed union, and feel my obligations to every person instrumental therein. Above all, I desire to thank my great Benefactor for giving you to my bosom, and to fulfil his gracious end by leading you to the marriage of the Lamb.

“We had a glorious watch-night. I must defer my journey to Canterbury, because next Friday is our day of fasting and humiliation. Give them at Clifton notice.

“I send you a copy of a letter from a merchant at Lisbon, dated, Nov. 4th, 1755 :—‘Dear Sir,—You will have heard of a violent earthquake we have had at Lisbon, which has demolished the whole city, and the greatest part of its inhabitants. To give you a description of this dreadful calamity would make your heart bleed. Those who have saved their lives think that sufficient, though they have lost their whole fortune. We have had continual shocks these three days. This morning we had two, and expect more, as the weather continues very hot. It is now as hot as it is with you at midsummer. My uncle and his family, with myself, were miraculously preserved. One half of the English as well as the Portuguese merchants will be ruined; for what the earthquake spared, a violent fire, which still rages, destroys. There is no knowing yet who is dead, and who living. The villages within several miles of this place are entirely destroyed. This I write from my encampment in a field, belonging to my uncle’s country house, about a mile and a half from Lisbon. God grant England may never experience such a disaster!’

“Send me a copy of my hymns on our wedding-day. Have you paid our landlord?”

“Dec. 4th, Dornford. My dearest Sally anticipates what I am going to write. George and Susanna are inseparably one! We are just returned from church. ‘The day so calm, so cool, so bright,’ looks like April 8th.* You only are wanting in Miss Stonehouse’s place. She shows great self-command. We had a most successful journey. It would have done you good to have accompanied us. All here regret your absence.

* Mr. Charles Wesley’s own wedding-day.

“Miss Degge’s marriage may be delayed some days or weeks. I shall write more determinately from London, for which I set out to-morrow. By the 7th of next month I may turn my face westward, unless the French interpose. The Lord fill your heart with prayer and love! Farewell.”

“Dec. 7th. On Thursday morning I set out at eight, without bidding the bride good morrow, and rode to Tetsworth, in a severe frost. There we were glad to take shelter in a post-chaise.

“My brother tells me the French are expected every hour, by General Hawley, in battle array; that the Government have not the least doubt of the invasion, but will do their best to repel force by force. I question whether my brother’s soldiers, with all his haste and pains to train them up, will not be too tardy to rescue us.

“Great things have been done for Lisbon. A ship was immediately sent off with a thousand barrels of flour; another from Falmouth, laden with herrings, pickaxes, &c.; a man-of-war, to guard the port and ruins, &c. On the day of the earthquake they were to have had an act of faith; that is, a bonfire of the poor Jews and heretics. All the English, therefore, went out of town, as usual, and so escaped.

“You may direct for me at Mr. Wright’s, Plumber, in Frith-street, Soho, Westminster, till farther orders.”

“Westminster, Dec. 26th. My beloved friend would rejoice to be among us; for the Lord is with us of a truth. The word never returns void. This morning I preached on Stephen, praying for his murderers, and pressed his example upon the hearers, feeling, at the same time, that I could myself love my worst enemy. How safe and happy should we always be, if incapable of resentment! How open to misery till we come to this! I want to *see* an injury done myself or friends, without *feeling* it: or, rather, to feel it in a way of sorrow and compassion, not of anger or revenge. Why should I be as the troubled sea through the breath of every injurious person? My peace has too long laid at another’s mercy. The Lord arm us both with that love which beareth all things, hopeth all things, believeth all things, endureth all things!

“Keep all Farley’s newspapers against I come. We must

not despair yet of setting my brother right, and through him the Preachers.”

Such was the spirit in which Mr. Charles Wesley closed the important and eventful year of 1755. His anxieties were profound and incessant; yet he continued the exercise of his ministry with his wonted energy and success, and his ever-active mind poured forth its feelings in sacred verse. Nothing could separate him, either in labour or affection, from his brother, notwithstanding their diversity of opinion respecting the national Church, and the certain prospect of their future collision on the same subject. Many of the people belonging to the societies were his own children in the Lord; and his heart clave to them in that relation, while he also regarded them as among the excellent ones of the earth.

The fine hymn beginning,—

How happy are the little flock,
Who, safe beneath their guardian Rock,
In all commotions rest,

was written after hearing of the destruction of Lisbon, and of the expected invasion of England by the French. He sent it in a somewhat unfinished form in a letter to his wife.

In the course of this year his poetry assumed something of a new character. He did not confine himself to the composition of hymns, but wrote several poetic Epistles to different friends, on topics which deeply interested his own mind. That which he addressed to his brother concerning the Church, and published in the month of May, has been already mentioned. Howell Harris was in danger of losing his zeal and usefulness through the influence of the principles which had laid aside Gambold and Stonehouse; and the poet of Methodism endeavoured to rouse him from the soothing dream by an Epistle of the most stirring kind; contrasting Howell's former energy with his present supineness. The Welsh Evangelist was half inclined to be offended with the liberty thus taken; and Charles followed up the blow, by a second Epistle, confirming the first, and describing in strong terms the antichristian tendency of the Quietism which his friend had begun to affect. The charm was

broken; and the Cambrian Itinerant, by a renewal of his former activity, proved that he was "Harris still."

Mr. Charles Wesley also addressed an Epistle to Mr. Whitefield, full of affection and poetic fire, lamenting their differences of opinion, especially the unkind and misguided warmth connected with it; and inviting that "good soldier of Jesus Christ" to an untiring perseverance in the gigantic course of labour to which they were called, and had been so signally sanctioned by the divine blessing. To these sentiments the generous heart of Mr. Whitefield eagerly responded. Hence Mr. John Wesley states in his Journal, under the date of Nov. 5th, "Mr. Whitefield called upon me. Disputings are now no more. We love one another, and join hand in hand to promote the cause of our common Master."

Two Epistles Mr. Charles Wesley also sent to the ex-Vicar of Islington, (who was wasting his life in retirement at Dornford,) anticipating, with an affection the most tender and yearning, his deliverance from the spell by which he was bound, and a renewal of his active services in the cause of Christ and of mankind. In one of these compositions he makes an affecting reference to the first Mrs. Stonehouse, who was one of his spiritual children, and was now in paradise. His "friend George" thanked him for these kind and Christian Epistles; but remarked that there were in them passages of which he did "not approve." This was to be expected; for when reproof is just, and therefore touches the conscience, it is seldom liked. Mr. Stonehouse, however, forgave the liberty of expostulation that had been taken with him; and at his second marriage, as we have seen, he requested Mr. Charles Wesley to perform the ceremony: for which acceptable service he received from the happy bridegroom the sum of ten guineas; which was doubtless found to be very useful, as the poet was at this time so straitened in his circumstances as to have intimated to his wife the necessity of giving up housekeeping for the winter.

Count Zinzendorf too was favoured with an Epistle from this faithful monitor; not indeed in the shape of compliment or congratulation, but of free and earnest rebuke. The perversion of such men as Gambold and Stonehouse was a sin which he knew not how to forgive, or even to palliate.

The theology of which the Count was now the abettor, Mr. Charles Wesley regarded as unscriptural and dangerous. It was that of Antinomianism and of universal restoration. The alienation of pious men from the Church of England, for the purpose of forming them into a distinct and separate Church, in which this distinguished foreigner had considerable success, Mr. Charles Wesley deprecated as an evil of fearful magnitude. To the conversion of men from sin to holiness he attached the utmost possible importance; but proselytism, and especially proselytism to inglorious silence and inactivity, he could not endure.

These various Epistles, with another of earlier date, which was addressed "to a Friend," Mr. Charles Wesley transcribed into a volume, to which he gave the title, "Epistles to Moravians, Predestinarians, and Methodists. By a Clergyman of the Church of England." It bears the following motto:—"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." (John x. 16.) The probability is, that he intended at some time to commit the whole to the press: but that design he did not fulfil.

CHAPTER XX.

THE circumstances of the British nation at the beginning of the year 1756 were such as to excite the most painful feelings in every pious, humane, and patriotic mind. A terrible mortality had just been prevalent among the cattle, in various parts of England, so as, in some places, to leave scarcely any alive. Serious quarrels were commenced between the French and English colonies in North America; and many of the Protestants there were exposed to robbery and murder from their Romish neighbours. Lisbon had just been swallowed up by an earthquake. France assumed a hostile attitude; and her army, bent upon plunder, and full of hatred to Protestantism, threatened to cross the Channel, subvert the liberties of England, and seize the property which was there amassed. The people at home, having been long inured to peace, were supine, and indisposed to arm themselves, even in self-defence. What the issue would be, no one could divine; but the providential horizon was dark, and many persons apprehended great national suffering, with perhaps the subversion of Protestantism in this its strong-hold.

In this emergency the Methodists, like faithful watchmen, sounded the trumpet of danger. Mr. Whitefield published a stirring "Address to Persons of all Denominations, occasioned by the Alarm of an intended Invasion;" in which he depicted, in strong colours, the cruel and intolerant spirit of Popery; and called upon all who valued their religion and liberty to apply themselves by prayer and personal effort to preserve both inviolate.

Mr. John Wesley, it would appear from a passage in one of his brother's letters, advised some of his people to learn the military exercise, that they might be the better prepared to defend their country and homes, in case the threat of invasion should be carried into execution. He also published his "Serious Thoughts occasioned by the late Earthquake at Lisbon;" addressed particularly to the higher classes of society, many of whom, influenced by a sceptical philosophy,

saw nothing in the earthquake and the pestilence but the regular operations of nature. Mr. Wesley strongly asserts the moral government of God ; the duty of penitence before Him on account of private and national sins ; and recommends true spiritual religion, as the best preparative for all calamities ; since it alleviates the sorrows of life, and prepares men for a world of security and blessedness, where neither sickness nor death can enter.

At the same time he published his modest, but faithful, "Address to the Clergy," as the men who ought to lead the way in the national reformation. A few devoted men had been raised up in the Church ; but the great body of the Clergy still slumbered at the post of duty ; or only exerted their energies to obstruct the revival of religion which had now been some years in progress. If any man in the land was justly authorized to admonish these unfaithful watchmen, it was John Wesley ; for no man of his age had either done or suffered so much for the public welfare, or had been so successful in stemming the torrent of iniquity, and in turning men to righteousness. From what was believed to be the bed of death, he had recently been raised almost by miracle : but he still regarded eternity as near ; for his health was far from being established. One evening, in returning from preaching, he says, "I came, as well as usual, to Moorfields ; but there my strength entirely failed, and such a faintness and weariness seized me, that it was with difficulty I got home. I could not but think, how happy it would be, (suppose we were ready for the Bridegroom,) to sink down, and steal away, at once, without any of the hurry and pomp of dying ! Yet it is happier still to glorify God in our death, as well as our life." * The charge of arrogance and presumption, which some preferred against him on account of this "Address," was nothing to a man who was just ready to step into the world of spirits. His main concern was, by fulfilling his task of duty, to meet his Almighty Judge with acceptance.

In this crisis of the national affairs Mr. Charles Wesley was not behind his brethren in effective zeal, though his services were of a somewhat different kind. The Government appointed the 6th of February as a day of fasting and public

* Journal, Dec. 12th, 1755.

humiliation before God ; and he composed and printed seventeen hymns adapted to the solemn occasion.* Several of them are of considerable length ; and in sublimity and force are equal to any compositions that had ever proceeded from his pen. They express the deepest sorrow on account of the national guilt ; the profoundest alarm at the prospect of God's impending judgments ; and strong confidence in Him as the only refuge in the time of danger. Three of these hymns were afterwards inserted in the general Wesleyan Collection. They are,—

Righteous God, whose vengeful phials ;

Stand the' omnipotent decree ;

and,—

How happy are the little flock.

Two stanzas in the first of these hymns were omitted by Mr. John Wesley, when he made the general Collection, as not suited to popular use. One of these is remarkable :—

Earth, unhinged as from her basis,
Owns her great Restorer nigh ;
Plunged in complicate distresses,
Poor distracted sinners cry ;
Men their instant doom deploring,
Faint beneath their fearful load :
Ocean working, rising, roaring,
Claps his hands to meet his God.

The bold personification of the sea, contained in the last two lines, doubtless refers to a fact which John Wesley thus states in his “ Serious Thoughts.” “ Who can account for

* Concerning the observance of this day in London, Mr. John Wesley says, “ The fast-day was a glorious day ; such as London has scarce seen since the Restoration. Every church in the city was more than full ; and a solemn seriousness sat on every face. Surely God heareth the prayer ; and there will be a lengthening of our tranquillity. Even the Jews observed this day with a peculiar solemnity. The form of prayer which was used in their synagogue began, ‘ Come, and let us return unto the Lord ; for He hath torn, and He will heal us ; ’ and concluded with those remarkable words :—‘ Incline the heart of our Sovereign Lord King George, as well as the hearts of his Lords and Counsellors, to use us kindly, and all our brethren the children of Israel ; that in his days, and in our days, we may see the restoration of Judah, and that Israel may dwell in safety, and the Redeemer may come to Zion. May it be thy will ! And we all say, Amen.’ ”—Journal.

the late motion in the waters; not only that of the sea, and of rivers communicating therewith, but even that in canals, fish-ponds, cisterns, and all either large or small bodies of water? It was particularly observed, that, while the water itself was so violently agitated, neither did the earth shake at all, nor any of the vessels which contained that water. Was such a thing ever known or heard of before?"

The following stanzas are also very striking. They are selected from a hymn, in six parts, founded upon the fourth chapter of Jeremiah's prophecies:—

I saw the earth by sin destroy'd,
And, lo, it lay wrapp'd up in night,
A chaos without form, and void,
And robb'd of all its heavenly light.

I saw, and, lo, the mountains shook,
The hills moved lightly to and fro,
The birds had all the skies forsook,
Nor man nor beast appear'd below.

I saw, and, lo, the fruitful place
Was to a ghastly desert turn'd;
Beneath JEHOVAH's frowning face,
The ghastly desert droop'd and mourn'd.

The nation suddenly o'erthrown
I saw before the waster's sword;
The cities all were broken down,
In presence of their angry Lord.

This tract, possessing so much poetic beauty and strength, breathing the most fervent and elevated piety, and so well adapted to the existing state of things, quickly passed to a second edition, in the title of which the reference to the fast-day was omitted; that day having passed away.

The publication of this admirable tract was not the only service which Mr. Charles Wesley rendered to the cause of religion and of the nation in this season of distress. He also reprinted, with enlargements, the "Hymns for Times of Trouble and Persecution," which he had composed during the Rebellion of 1745, as being applicable to the present state of the country, menaced, as in the former instance, by Papal intolerance. At the same time he put to press another edition of his "Hymns on the Earthquake of 1750," with

three additions : one, a prayer for the English in America ; another, on the destruction of Lisbon ; and a third for the year 1756. A part of that on the overthrow of Lisbon was afterwards inserted in the general Wesleyan Collection. It begins,—

Woe to the men on earth who dwell,
Nor dread the' Almighty's frown.

Some of the omitted stanzas are the following :—

A voice out of the temple cries,
And from the' eternal throne,
And all the storms of vengeance rise,
When God declares "'TIS DONE!"
'TIS DONE! ten thousand voices join
To' applaud his righteous ire ;
And thunders roll and lightnings shine,
That set the world on fire.

The mighty shock seems now begun,
Beyond example great ;
And, lo, the world's foundations groan
As at their instant fate !
JEHOVAH shakes the shatter'd ball,
Sign of the general doom !
The cities of the nations fall,
And Babel's hour is come.

Such was the manner in which this man of God aided the devotions of the more religious part of the nation, and endeavoured to render the afflictive dispensations of divine Providence subservient to the cause of piety, and the improvement of public morals. His hymns, which far surpassed in power and correct versification all similar compositions that had before appeared in the English language, must have produced considerable effect at the time, adapted as they were to public events upon which every eye was intensely fixed.

The early part of the year 1756 Mr. Charles Wesley appears to have spent in Bristol ; for there he printed the tracts which have been just mentioned, adapted to the state of the nation. His brother was in London and the neighbourhood during this period. Taking Bristol and Wales in his way, Mr. John Wesley embarked for Ireland at the end of March, and remained there till the middle of August following ; and it is probable that Charles took his place in

the metropolis : for as the societies there were accustomed to a weekly sacrament, and none were allowed to administer it but Clergymen who had received episcopal ordination, it was requisite that one of the brothers should generally be in town.

The Conference of this year was held in Bristol. It did not begin till towards the close of August. From the last Conference Mr. Charles Wesley had abruptly retired, when he found that he could not bring either his brother or the Preachers fully to entertain his views concerning the Church ; and he then hastily said, “ I have done with Conferences for ever.” The remark was made under the influence of momentary excitement, and did not express the fixed purpose of his mind. Accordingly he met his brother and the Preachers at this their annual assembly in Bristol. About fifty of them were present : a large number for that time ; but less by ten than were in Leeds the year before. The Rules of the society, of the bands, and of Kingswood School, were carefully reviewed ; and some verbal alterations were made in those of the bands. The others remained as they were, and all pledged themselves afresh to observe and enforce them. The question of remaining in the Church was also brought under consideration ; and a unanimity like that of the last year prevailed. Mr. John Wesley says, “ We largely considered the necessity of keeping in the Church, and using the Clergy with tenderness ; and there was no dissenting voice. God gave us all to be of one mind and of one judgment. My brother and I closed the Conference by a solemn declaration of our purpose never to separate from the Church ; and all our brethren concurred therein.” *

About a fortnight after the conclusion of this Conference, Mr. Charles Wesley left home, on a visit to the societies in the principal towns of Staffordshire, Yorkshire, and Lancashire ; for the purpose of correcting what he might find amiss, of encouraging them in their Christian course, of preaching to them the word of life, and of extending the work of God wherever there should be an open door. This was a very eventful journey ; and the record which he kept of his daily proceedings and observations throws great light

* Journal.

upon the state of feeling among the Methodists with respect to the established Church. The alienation of affection from the Church, which he had observed and lamented in some of the Preachers, was by no means confined to them. The fact is undeniable, the Clergy, with few exceptions, did not like the Methodists, and pursued a conduct towards them which was the reverse of conciliatory. Not a few of them neither preached the truth, nor lived as became their sacred office. Mr. Charles Wesley also found, in various places, that persons of Dissenting principles had become members of the Methodist societies, and used their influence to draw away their brethren from the ministrations of the Clergy. Several of them had indeed become members of Dissenting churches, that they might enjoy a ministry which more fully accorded with their own views, and receive the Lord's supper at the hands of men whose practice was agreeable to their profession. The attempt to force the Methodists to an attendance upon the services of the Church, by refusing to them the sacraments from their own Preachers, and by closing their chapels during the Sabbath, except early in the morning, and in the evening, drove many of them into a state of actual separation both from the Church and their own societies, and placed them in the hands of Dissenters. At Leeds Mr. Edwards had assumed the character of an Independent Minister, as Charles Skelton had done in the south, and drawn away the greater part of the society with him. Titus Knight afterwards followed the same course in Halifax; and several of the Baptist and Independent churches in Lancashire and the west of Yorkshire were formed in these times, in a great measure out of the Methodist societies, because of the position in which these societies were placed in regard of the national Establishment, and the spirit of the Clergy. It will be observed, that Mr. Whitefield was at this time travelling over the same ground, and co-operated with his friend Mr. Charles Wesley, in the kindest manner, to keep the Methodist societies together, and induce them, according to their original order, to attend the prayers and sacrament in their several parish churches.

The notices which Mr. Charles Wesley has given, in his journal of this tour, concerning the societies formed by his old friend and companion, Mr. Ingham, and of his inter-

course with his clerical brethren, Mr. Crook, of Hunslet, and Mr. Williamson, of York, are interesting and valuable. When he met with a pious Clergyman, his soul exulted within him ; and he thought that the whole Church of England was just about to be purified from lukewarmness and formality, and appear in all the beauty and glory of New-Testament Christianity. What he desired, he readily believed. Most of Mr. Ingham's societies were afterwards broken up, through the influence of Antinomian tenets, borrowed from Sandeman and Glass, which involved them in fatal disputes. A copious extract from Mr. Charles Wesley's private journal is here subjoined :—

“ Sept. 17th, 1756. At seven I left Bristol, with John Downes, and came to Walbridge by two. In the evening several attended the word, and seemed stirred up to watch and pray. I spake to each of the little, steady society. Forty-three have kept together, for years, under the care of our brother Watts. There are no disputes or disorders among them. I added a few words, exhorting them to continue steadfast in the communion of the Church of England. We were much refreshed, and parted in great love.

“ Sept. 18th. I set out at six, and in three hours reached Cheltenham. The twelve miles thence to Evesham cost us near six hours : but we rode the short, that is, the vale, way ; and have taken our leave of it for ever. By four we got, weary enough, to Mr. Canning's. The preaching-room was full. I exhorted them to watch and pray always, that they might be counted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man. Again, at seven in the morning, and at five in the evening, they received my saying, the Lord applying his own word, both to awaken and to confirm.

“ I went to church, morning and afternoon ; and between the services visited three or four of the society, who had been disabled by age and infirmity from assembling with their brethren, and were therefore neglected, as not belonging to them. I wrote their names again in the society-book, with Mr. Canning's family, and J. Watson's, who seemed all resolved to do the first works. I did not forget to confirm the brethren in their calling ; that is, to live and die in the Church of England.

“Sept. 20th. After commending them to God, and to the word of his grace, I rode with our loving guide, J. Watson, toward Birmingham. At Studley he left us, full of his former zeal, and resolved to carry fire among his neighbours of the village to which he is removed. About two we got to Birmingham, and soon after heard at the door Mr. I’anson’s voice. He brought life with him. As a watchman of Israel, I warned a numerous audience of the sword coming. The word seemed to sink into their hearts. I had not time to meet the society; but in conversing with several I conceived fresh hopes that they will at last become a settled people. Some who had forsaken us, I received in again.

“Sept. 21st. The Lord gave us a parting blessing. Mr. I’anson’s chaise kept pace with us to Ashby, where our brother Adams received us joyfully. The wild beasts here are tamed, at least, if not converted. None molested while I pointed them to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world. We prayed earnestly for these hardened sinners. I was comforted with the little company of twenty-one, who meet to build up each other. Great life and love was in the midst of them.

“Sept. 22d. I warned them of the impending judgments, and left them standing on the watch-tower. We passed a profitable hour at Donnington-Park, with Mr. H. Mr. I’anson attended us five or six miles on our way to Nottingham, which we reached by two. I spent the afternoon in taking down the names of the society, and conversing with them. We rejoiced to meet once more, after so long a separation. My subject, both at night and in the morning, was, ‘I will bring the third part through the fire.’ It was a time of solemn rejoicing. There had been, twelve months ago, a great revival and increase of the society; but Satan was beginning again to sow his tares. My coming at this season will, I trust, be the means of preventing a division.

“Sept. 23d. It rained hard all night. John Downes’s lame horse detained him at Nottingham, by which the poor people got another sermon. At seven I set out in the rain with a blind guide, who at last blundered out his way to Sheffield. Here also I delivered my own soul; and the people seemed awakened and alarmed. I spake plainly and lovingly to the society of continuing in the Church: and

though many of them were Dissenters and predestinarians, none were offended.

“Sept. 24th. I had left William Shent sick in Charles-street; but to my great surprise, entering brother Green’s, at Rotherham, this morning, the first person I set my eyes on was William himself. The Sunday after I left him he had had another fit of his ague: yet on Monday morning he would needs mount his horse, and ride homeward. He had only one visit from his ague on the road, and grew stronger and stronger by virtue of prayer more than physic.

“When I was last here the society were on the brink of a separation through a party of Mr. Wheatley and Edwards. They proposed it to honest Mr. Cousins, whose opposing quashed it at that time. I then advised them to go to church. The weak and wavering were confirmed: three or four of the others were offended, and said I made the church Christ. After preaching as awakening as I could, I plainly told the society, that there was no salvation *out of the church*; that is, out of the mystical body of Christ, or the company of faithful people. When I had fully explained myself on this head, we were all of one mind and heart. They then suffered the word of exhortation, and were even glad when I said unto them, ‘Let us go into the house of the Lord.’

“Sept. 25th. I encouraged them by that precious promise, ‘I will bring the third part through the fire;’ and parted in great love. At eight I preached on the same subject at Barley-hall, and found there the never-failing blessing. I rode on with William Shent, who was threatened last night with the return of his fever. I was at a loss for a companion to York, when, in passing through Hunslet, one called after me. I turned, and saw Mr. Crook, who told me Dr. Cockburn was at his house, and had waited for me this week, to carry me to York. We lighted, and spent a delightful hour with the Doctor (my old schoolfellow) and him, both in their first love: both full of life, and zeal, and simplicity. Mr. Crook pressed me to assist him at the morning sacrament.

“Sunday, Sept. 26th. At seven I preached to the people at Leeds, on, ‘Thy kingdom come.’ The disciples lifted up their heads. I walked with Dr. Cockburn to Hunslet. Mr. Crook insisted on my preaching; which I did again from the

same words. His congregation seemed to make no opposition to the truth. There were hundreds of communicants, mostly of Mr. Crook's awakening.

"We passed an hour and a half at his house with the voice of joy and thanksgiving. Then he pressed me into the service again. His church, which holds nearly as many as our preaching-house, was filled from end to end. At his desire I preached from those words: 'His blood be on us, and on our children.' Our Lord turned the curse into a blessing.

"I doubted my strength, yet set out for Leeds. The room was excessively crowded, both within and without. I was very faint as I mentioned my text, 'When these things begin to come to pass, then look up; for the time of your redemption draweth near.' The word refreshed both soul and body. The hearers were variously affected. O that all may be found watching!

"I could speak of nothing but love in the society, for I felt nothing else. Great was our rejoicing over each other. Satan, I believe, has done his worst, and will get no further advantage by exasperating their spirits against their departing brethren. They were unanimous to stay in the Church, because the Lord stays in it, and multiplies his witnesses therein, more than in any other Church in Christendom.

"Sept. 27th. I was surprised at the numbers that flocked to the early preaching, and eagerly received that saying of our Lord, 'Behold, I come as a thief: blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments.' I breakfasted with Miss Norton, and found nothing in my heart towards her but love. She was not so evil affected towards her forsaken brethren as I expected. Nothing can ever bring such as her back, but the charity which hopeth all things, beareth all things, endureth all things.

"Several came to confer with me, particularly Benjamin S——. I had great satisfaction with him. While we were drinking tea at a brother's, Mr. Edwards found me out. We talked freely and lovingly till the time of preaching. I walked with him to the house. Mr. Crook was another of my hearers. My text was, 'His blood be upon us, and upon our children.' The power of the Lord was present, more than yesterday. I went to the Church-prayers with several

who have been long dealt with to forsake them utterly. They will stand the firmer, I hope, for their shaking.

“Sept. 28th. I set out with the Doctor and William Shent for York. The rain brought back poor William’s ague. I preached from Hab. iii. 2: ‘O Lord, revive thy work.’ The crowd made our room excessively hot; but that did not hinder their attention.

“Sept. 29th. Our Preacher stationed here had quite left off preaching in the morning. Many told me, I could not get a congregation at five; but I found it otherwise. The room was almost full while I explained, ‘Being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.’ I insisted largely on freedom from sin, as the lowest mark of faith, and the necessity of labouring after holiness. The hearers appeared much stirred up.

“I spent the day in conversing with all comers. The Doctor’s house was open to all, and his heart also: his whole desire being to spread the Gospel.

“Sept. 30th. My subject was John v. 14: ‘Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.’ I warned them against that sweet doctrine, ‘Once in grace, always in grace,’ but not in a controversial way; pointed out some of the infinite ways whereby they might forfeit their pardon; exhorted them to go to church, that they might be found of Jesus in the temple: and, above all, to pray always, that that word might be written on their hearts, ‘Go, and sin no more.’

“The day was well spent in making up a difference which the sower of tares had occasioned among the principal members of the society. Between six and seven I got the society together, with many out of the country, and for two hours showed them how they ought to walk. They gladly received instruction.

“Oct. 1st. I preached again to the awakened, and perceived the word take place. I breakfasted with T. Brook, who has once more left the Brethren. I went with him to the minster, which he constantly frequents. I met at his house Miss T——, earnestly seeking salvation. The means of awakening her was ‘Theron and Aspasio.’ I heard that the

young woman who cried out last night under convictions was the same hour delivered into the glorious liberty of God's children.

"I passed an hour at Mr. D——'s, and answered his candid objections. I had an opportunity of vindicating my old friend Benjamin Ingham. It is hard a man should be hanged for his looks; for the *appearance* of Moravianism. Their spirit and practices he has as utterly renounced as we have: their manner and phrase cannot so soon be shaken off.

"I found out Mercy Bell, and had sweet fellowship with her. I marvel not that the Friends (so fallen from their first simplicity) cannot receive her testimony.

"We had a most triumphant watch-night. We began between seven and eight. The enemy did not like our employment, and stirred up his servants without to interrupt us; but our voices prevailed. We sung the 'Hymns in a Tumult' with great calmness and consolation. Mr. Williamson's maid was deeply wounded. The shout of a King was in the midst of us; and the people thought it full early to part at eleven.

"Oct. 2d. The whole day was spent in singing, conference, and prayer. I attended the quire service. The people there were marvellously civil, and obliged me with the anthem I desired, Hab. iii., 'a feast for a King,' as Queen Anne called it. Mr. Williamson walked with me to his house, in the face of the sun. I would have spared him; but he was quite above fear. A pious, sensible Dissenter clave to us all day, and accompanied us to the preaching. I discoursed on my favourite subject: 'I will bring the third part through the fire.' We glorified God *in* the fire, and rejoiced in hope of coming forth as gold.

"Sunday, Oct. 3d. From five till near eight I talked closely with each of the society; then, on Mr. Williamson's request, preached on the ordinances, from Isaiah lxiv. 5: 'In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.' I dwelt longest on what has been most neglected, family prayer, public prayer, and the sacrament. The Lord set to his seal, and confirmed the word with a double blessing. I dismissed them at nine. Our Preachers had often kept them till near ten, and thereby hindered their going to church.

"I received the sacrament at the minster. It was a

solemn passover. They were forced to consecrate twice, the congregation being doubled and trebled through my exhortations and example. Glory be to God alone ! I found great faith to pray for him that consecrated, and heard afterwards that it was Mr. B——; one who had known the Methodists from their rise at Oxford, and was no enemy to them. I expect (if I hold out myself) to meet that soul in paradise.

“ I went to Mr. Williamson’s church. He read prayers, as one that felt them, and then beckoned me. According to our private agreement, I stepped into the pulpit, when no one expected it, and cried to a full audience, ‘The kingdom of God is at hand : repent ye, and believe the Gospel.’ They were all attention. The word did not return void, but accomplished that for which it was sent. Neither is he that planted anything ; neither is he that watereth.

“ Dr. Cockburn carried me in his chair to Acomb. I lost my voice in the rain, and could not, without much straining, cry, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world !’ A Clergyman and the gentry of the place were present. The rain dispersed us in half an hour. I attempted to meet the society at York, but could not speak to be heard. We got thereby a longer evening at the hospitable Doctor’s. Mr. Williamson and his family, &c., were helpers of our joy.

“ Oct. 4th. I took my leave, in the words of the Apostle, ‘The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men ; teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the world.’ From hence I strongly pressed the obedience of faith. We parted in body only.

“ Through God’s blessing on my week’s stay among them, I hope, 1. Peace and love are restored. 2. They will recover their rising at five. 3. They are brought back again to church and sacrament, and family prayer.

“ Dr. Cockburn and his lady attended me to Tadcaster, where I found both voice and strength to point many earnest souls to the all-atoning Lamb. The gentry listened, as well as the poor. Both dismissed me with blessings.

“ It rained as soon as we took horse. We were quickly wet to the skin, the high wind driving the storm full in our faces. I was most concerned for poor William Shent, and

forced him to stop at the first house. There I reproved a countryman for swearing, and gave a word of advice, which was kindly taken. We took refuge again at Seacroft, and enjoyed the last fair hour, which brought us to Leeds by two. I renewed my strength against preaching-time ; after which I met the Leaders, and earnestly exhorted them to set a pattern to the flock.

“ Oct. 5th. I preached in William Shent’s shop. I breakfasted at Miss Norton’s. There Mr. Edwards assured me, he had never *desired* any one of our children to leave us. Doubtless they did it of their own mere motion. No one ever dealt or took any pains with them about it. No one ever spoke against the Church, to unhinge them. They dropped into his mouth (as our first children into the Count’s) without his ever suspecting it !

“ If he has robbed us of our children, I bless God to find he has not robbed us of our peace and love. He several times expressed his readiness to preach in our societies. I only answered, the people could not trust him, that he would not do in every place as he had done in Leeds. I endeavoured to treat him with due respect and love, according to our rule : ‘ If it be possible, as much as in you lieth, live peaceably with all men.’

“ I passed the day at Mr. Crook’s, who told me his experience. I cannot doubt of his having known the pangs of the new birth. Our brethren question it, because he does not use all their phrases, and cannot follow all their violent counsels. I begged him to do nothing rashly ; least of all, to go from his post, preaching everywhere like us.

“ I drank tea at a sister’s, who has been as the troubled sea ever since the separation ; and as rough towards all, especially her husband, as Mr. Edwards is smooth. I laboured to quiet her ; and she was sensible of the great advantage Satan had gained over her. Alas, for the man by whom the offence cometh !

“ I walked to Hunslet with William Shent, and heard Mr. Crook expound in the church. I dined with him, and was provoked by his zeal. Returning, I found ——— at my lodgings, and threw away some words on one, wiser in his own eyes than seven men that can render a reason. He entirely justified Mr. Edwards : therefore I can have no con-

fidence in him, that he will not do, were it in his power, as Mr. Edwards has done.

“ Henry Thornton came to spend an hour or two with us ; and we sharpened each other’s countenance. At six I met the Leaders, and inquired into the behaviour of each member of the society. Upwards of forty Mr. Edwards has carried off ; but not by *desiring* any to leave us ! I carried them with me to prayers, and wished them to follow my example, by carrying the whole society to church with them. I returned to the room, and explained the believer’s privilege, 1 Peter i. 5 : ‘ Kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.’

“ I had more talk with ———, who frankly confessed, if any of our societies should desire him to take charge of them, as a distinct body, he should not refuse them. I told him plainly, that the ground of all such designs was pride : but my words were spoken into the air.

“ After church I set out in a storm for Seacroft ; and rode on to Aberford. My old friend Mr. Ingham was labouring in the vineyard ; but I had the happiness to find Lady Margaret at home, and their son Ignatius. She informed me that his round takes in about four hundred miles ; that he has six fellow-labourers ; and one thousand souls in his societies, most of them converted. I sincerely rejoiced in his success. Ignatius would hardly be satisfied at my not preaching. We passed an hour and a half very profitably, and set out again. The rain met and drove us under a tree for shelter. We narrowly missed several heavy showers, and got safe back to Seacroft before night.

“ Soon after our dearest brother Grimshaw found us, and brought a blessing with him. I preached from Luke xxi. 34 : ‘ Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares ;’ and farther enforced our Lord’s warning in the society. I strongly exhorted them to continue steadfast in fellowship with each other, and the whole Church of England. Our hearts were comforted and knit together.

“ Oct. 8th. We had another blessed hour with them, before we left this lively people. I continued till one in conference with my worthy friend and fellow-labourer : a man after my

own heart! whose love of the Church flows from his love of Christ. With such may my lot be cast in both worlds!

“We spent an hour in intercession for the Church and nation. I exhorted the many persons present to continue instant in this prayer, and mark the answer and the end!

“I rode with my faithful brother Grimshaw to Bramley, and preached in a large barn, (now a convenient chapel,) to a multitude of serious souls, who eagerly received our Lord’s saying, ‘Look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth near.’ They all seemed broad awake, when I called again in the morning, ‘Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.’ Their spirit quickened mine. We had sweet fellowship together. I have no doubt they will be counted worthy to escape, and to stand before the Son of man.

“Returning to Leeds I met my brother Whitefield, and was much refreshed by the account of his abundant labours. I waited on him to our room, and gladly sat under his word. I preached myself at Rothwell. Their large house was full, though it was a harvest-day. I warned them of the impending storm with much freedom, and faith for the sincere; concluding with a warm exhortation to continue in the ship.

“Sunday, Oct. 10th. From Isaiah lxiv. 5, ‘In those is continuance, and we shall be saved,’ I earnestly pressed the duties of constant communicating; of hearing, reading, practising the word; of fasting; of private, family, and public prayer. The society I advised to continue in fellowship, and never more give place to the sower of tares, the divider of the brethren. I spoke healingly of the breach; told them how to behave towards Mr. Skelton and the rest who have risen up to draw away disciples after them; and insisted on that apostolical precept, ‘Let all your things be done in charity.’ I did not mention the author of the last division, being convinced he had left us for bread.

“The spirit of love and union was in the midst of us. I came to Birstal before noon. My congregation was less by a thousand or two through George Whitefield’s preaching to-day at Haworth. Between four and five thousand were left

to receive my warning. After church we met again. Every soul seemed to hang on the word. Two such precious opportunities I have not enjoyed this many a day. It was the old time revived. A weighty spirit ran through the congregation; and they stood like men prepared to meet the Lord.

“Oct. 11th. After preaching at five to this solid people, I returned to Leeds, and spent an hour with the Leaders. They informed me that my late exhortations have stopped some who were on the point of going away to Mr. Edwards’s society, and brought others back to the Church-ordinances. A woman in particular, after hearing me on Sunday morning, went to church, which she had long forsaken, and received a manifestation of Jesus Christ in the prayers. I earnestly pressed them to recommend to their brethren, both by advice and example, the neglected duties of family and public prayer, and to watch over the flock with all diligence.

“Hearing that Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Grimshaw were returning to our watch-night, I waited for them at their lodgings, with zealous, humble, loving Mr. Crook. It rained so hard, that Mr. Whitefield was agreeably surprised at eight to find our house as full as it could cram. They forced me to preach first; which I did, from, ‘I will bring the third part through the fire.’ My brother George seconded me in the words of our Lord, ‘I say unto all, Watch.’ The prayers and hymns were all attended with ■ solemn power. Few, if any, I hope, went unawakened away.

“Oct. 12th. I took my leave of Leeds, in prayer at William Shent’s. Some having ascribed the division to him, I examined that matter to the bottom, having talked largely with all parties, especially Miss Norton, and Mr. Edwards himself. Upon the whole, I am convinced that the ground of all was Miss Norton’s hatred to William Shent. This induced her to draw away Mr. Edwards from us. He could not resist the temptation of a certain provision for his family. Interest blinded his eyes; so that the means to his end seemed right and honest to him, though base and treacherous to us. As for William Shent, I do not find he did more than every upright man would have done on the occasion. He watched to counteract them who were daily seducing our children. He gave early notice to my brother of their design, and

thereby drew all their resentment upon himself; as every honest Preacher will, *qui cum ingeniis conflictatur ejusmodi*. Since the separation (Mr. Edwards's friend informed me) he has behaved with such mildness and discretion as has kept the rest of the flock together, when violence, or harsh treatment, might have scattered them all.

"I preached in Wakefield, at ten, to a quieter audience than I have ever met with there.

"I took a friendly leave of Miss Norton, who assured me, some of our ablest Preachers were entirely in Mr. Edwards's interest. *Nec nihil, nec omnia*.

"I rode to Joseph Bennet's, near Dewsbury, and preached very awakening to a mixed, attentive congregation. My vehement exhortation to the society was on the usual subject: continuance in the word, and in prayers, family and public. I passed the evening with Jonas E——d. I would gladly part with five hundred Methodists, to be ordained and useful like him.

"Oct. 13th. The word at Birstal was clothed with power, both to awaken and to confirm. My principal concern is for the disciples, that their houses may be built on the rock, before the rains descend. I hear in most places the effect of the word; but I hearken after it less than formerly; and take little notice of those who say they receive comfort, or faith, or forgiveness. Let their fruits show. I preached at night, and rejoiced in steadfast hope of being brought through the fire.

"Oct. 14th. I baptized a Dissenter's child, and set out with faithful Titus Knight for Halifax. A mixed multitude listened to the word, 'When thy judgments are abroad in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.' I have not found so great freedom in any place as this, where I expected least. I set out in hard rain for Bradford. My subject there was, 'O Lord, revive thy work.' Many Dissenters were present, some of them, I believe, were reached; for I spake in irresistible love, and warned them to flee from the wrath to come.

"Oct. 15th. After preaching I gathered into the fold a wandering sheep, whom John Whitford's pride and folly had scattered. Having lost her first love, she married an unconverted man; whereupon the society gave her up for lost. I

rejoiced to find her miserable in prosperity, and restless to recover her only happiness.

“I found comfort in the first lesson at church. I could be glad to attend the public prayers constantly, for my own as well as for example’s sake. The preaching-house was filled with those that came from far. Our Lord did not send them empty away. A girl of fourteen, who had walked from Birstal, told me she seemed carried under the word, as out of the body. What to call the manifestation of the Spirit then given her, time and temptation will show. Near two hours more we rejoiced at a primitive love-feast.

“Oct. 16th. I breakfasted again with my lost sheep that is found, for whose sake chiefly I believe myself sent to Bradford. Last night at the love-feast she recovered her shield. I took my leave of the brethren in that promise, ‘He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.’ I rode with faithful Thomas Colbeck to Keighley, and found at four a large, handsome room well filled. I did my office, as a watchman, and delivered my own soul. Mr. Grimshaw assisted at the society. I recommended family religion with all my might. For near an hour and a half the cloud stayed on the assembly.

“Sunday, Oct. 17th. We had no room to spare at five in the morning, while I commended them to God, and to the word of his grace. I preached a second time, at Haworth, (Mr. Grimshaw reading prayers,) from Psalm xlv. 8, 9: ‘O come hither, and behold the works of the Lord; what destruction He hath brought on the earth. He maketh wars to cease in all the world.’ My mouth was opened to declare the approaching judgments, and the glory which shall follow, when the Lord is exalted in all the earth. The church, which had been lately enlarged, could scarce contain the congregation, who seemed all to tremble at the threatenings, or rejoice in the promises, of God. We had a blessed number of communicants, and the Master of the feast in the midst. I prayed and exhorted afterwards. Our hearts were lifted up to meet Him in his glorious kingdom.

“After an hour’s interval we met again, as many as the church-walls could contain; but twice the number stood without, till the prayers were over. Then I mounted a scaffold, and, lifting up my eyes, saw the fields white unto

harvest. We had prayed for a fair day, and had the petitions we asked. The churchyard, which will hold thousands, was quite covered. God gave me a voice to reach them all. I warned them of those things which shall come to pass, and warmly pressed them to private, family, and public prayer. I enlarged on the glorious consequences thereof, even deliverance from the last plagues, and standing before the Son of man. I concluded, and began again ; for it was an accepted time. I do not remember when my mouth has been more opened, or my heart more enlarged.

“A young Preacher, of Mr. Ingham’s, came to spend the evening with me at Mr. Grimshaw’s. I found great love for him, and wished all our sons in the Gospel were equally modest and discreet.

“Oct. 18th. He accompanied us to Heptonstall, where I preached at ten, on Isaiah lxiv. 5 : ‘In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.’ I was very faint when I began : the more plainly did it appear that the power was not of man, but of God. I warned them of the wiles of the devil, whereby he would draw them away from the Church, and the other means of grace. I spake as the oracles of God ; and God gave testimony, bowing the hearts of all present, except a few bigoted Baptists. We went on our way rejoicing to Ewood. There the hard rain cut short my discourse from Ezek. ix. Mr. Allen could not leave us yet, but rode with us next morning as far as Gawksholm. I stood on a scaffold, at the foot of a *Welsh* mountain, having all the people in front, and called, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world !’ The word was as a two-edged sword. I knew not then that several Baptists were present : a carnal, cavilling, contentious sect, always watching to steal away our children, and make them as dead as themselves. Mr. Allen informed me that they have carried off no less than fifty out of one society ; and that several Baptist meetings are wholly made out of old Methodists. I talked largely with Grimshaw how to remedy the evil. We agreed, 1. That nothing can save the Methodists from falling a prey to every seducer, but close walking with God, in all the commandments and ordinances, especially the word, and prayer, private, family, and public. 2. That the Preachers should be allowed more time in every place, to visit from house to house, after Mr.

Baxter's manner. 3. That a small treatise be written, to ground and preserve them against seducers, and lodged in every family.

"We came safe to Bolton, with the night. Above forty of these poor shattered people still keep together. Many of those without flocked to the word. In great bodily weakness I warned them to fly to the city of refuge; tried to calm the spirits of our children; and we were comforted together through hope of our Lord's appearing.

"Oct. 20th. I talked kindly to poor John Whitford, who seemed quite sick of his separate congregation; so head-strong and untractable; so like their humble slave and teacher! His principles, as well as his spirit, have cut off his retreat:

Vestigia nulla retrorsum,

when once a Methodist Preacher has abused both our and our children's confidence, by setting up for himself. This he could never think of till the salt had lost its savour.

"The rain quickened our pace to Manchester. I took up my lodgings at Mr. Phillips's. My subject at night was, 'When these things begin to come to pass, then look up; for your redemption draweth near.' Many Arian and Socinian Dissenters were present, and gnashed upon me with their teeth, while I preached the coming of Jesus Christ, the one eternal, self-existing God, to take vengeance on them, and on all his enemies, who would not have Him to reign over them.

"Oct. 21st. I finished my discourse to our Lord's disciples. I parted with my right hand, my brother and bosom friend, Grimshaw. I breakfasted at Mrs. F——'s, and rejoiced to find that, though she had left us, she had not utterly forsaken God. Her soul has suffered loss, yet her good desires remain. Here my old friend J. Bolton found me out, and confirmed his love to me.

"From church I went to dine with our sister Rider, still waiting for the consolation of Israel. I drank tea with Dr. Byrom, and was hard put to it to defend my brother's book against Mr. Law. We got at last to a better subject, and parted not without a blessing. At night I discoursed on Titus ii. 11. I spoke close and home on practical faith, and relative duties: but more closely still to the society.

“It seems the famous Mr. Roger Ball is now among them, picking up their pence and their persons. They were smit with admiration of so fine a man ; (Thomas Williams himself was nothing to him ;) and invited him to settle with them. Another new Preacher they have also got, a young Baptist, who is gathering himself a meeting out of them ; like the Baptist teachers who have borrowed so many of Mr. Grimshaw’s children. Our society in Manchester was upwards of two hundred ; but their itching ears have reduced them to half the number.

“To these I showed the melancholy state of the members of the established Church, who are the most unprincipled and ignorant of all that are called Protestants ; and therefore exposed to every seducer who thinks it worth his while to turn them Dissenters, Moravians, or Papists. I told them, of all the members of the Church of England, the poor Methodists are most exposed, because serious, and therefore worth stealing ; and of all the Methodists, those of Manchester are in the greatest danger, because the most unsettled and unadvisable. I challenged them to show me one Methodist who had ever prospered by turning Dissenter. I asked what would become of them when my brother should die ? whether they would not then be scattered, and broken into twenty sects, old and new ? To prevent this, I advised them, 1. To get grace, or the love and power of God, which alone could keep and stablsh their hearts. 2. To continue in all the means of obtaining this, especially the word, and prayer of all kinds ; to read the Scriptures daily, to go constantly to church and sacrament.

“Our brother Johnson tells me, since he sent the people back to church, two have received forgiveness in the prayers there, and two more in the sermon of a Church Minister. There are now three sound Preachers in these parts. If they continue steadfast, they may undo the great evil which the unsound Preachers have done, and confirm our children in their calling.

“I cannot leave them in so unsettled a condition ; and therefore intend, with God’s leave, to spend another week among them. I talked with the Leaders, and earnestly pressed them to set an example to the flock, by walking in all the commandments and ordinances.

“Oct. 22d. After preaching I talked with several of the society, particularly a young woman, who seemed quite overwhelmed with the love of Christ, which she received yesterday in private prayer. I went to St. Anne’s prayers, and thence to the room. We began our first hour of intercession. Many more than we expected were present. I gave an exhortation, showing the end of our meeting every Friday, as Englishmen, and members of the Church of England, to deprecate the national judgments, and to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. I have rarely known so solemn an assembly. They were pleased to hear that we design to continue meeting every week.

“I went thence to seek that which was lost: poor H. O. He made me very happy by his misery, and restlessness to return. Once more, I trust, there will be joy in heaven over him.

“I began in the evening to expound the whole armour of God, Eph. vi. After I had done, the famous Mr. Ball lifted up his voice; and a magnificent voice it was. I bade our people depart in peace, which they did. The enemy roared some time in the midst of the room, (not congregation,) threatening me for scandalizing him, and depriving his family of their bread. I believe he is defrauded of his prey, through my coming *in ipso temporis articulo*, when he promised himself a good provision out of our society. No wonder Satan rages at his disappointment.

“I met the society in calm love. There was no farther need of my mentioning Satan’s apostle; for he had sufficiently showed himself. The snare is thereby broken, and the simple souls delivered. I lovingly exhorted them to stand fast in one mind, and one spirit, in the old paths, or ways of God’s appointing. Henceforth they will not believe every spirit. The Lord stablish their hearts with grace!

“Experience convinces me, more and more, that the Methodists can never prosper, or even stand their ground, unless they continue steadfast in the ordinances. The society here used to be scattered on the Lord’s day, in the fields, or sleeping in their houses. This invited all the beasts of the forest to devour them. Suffice the time that is past. We are not ignorant now of Satan’s devices.

“Oct. 23d. I proceeded to expound the whole armour of

God. We were a little too early for Mr. Ball and his friends : two of whom last night had laid violent hands on me. One was a sister of ours, till her curiosity betrayed her into the hands of Mr. Ball.

“I breakfasted at brother Barlow’s, and rejoiced in the remembrance of his blessed sister, now in glory. For seven years she adorned the Gospel in all things.

“I took horse with brother Phillips for Hatfield, which we reached by one. The sun shone all day without a cloud, to the great comfort of the poor husbandmen. I found at Hatfield just such a family as *was* once at Fonmon-castle. The master indeed was absent, but had left word that his church and house expected me.

“I preached at seven to a houseful of the parishioners, on, ‘Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.’ They bore my plain speaking. The awakened were much comforted.

“The voice of joy and thanksgiving is in the habitations of the righteous. I thought I was got back to Mr. Jones’s castle. We continued our triumph two hours longer, and could hardly part at last, and not without grudging our bodies their necessary rest.

“Sunday, Oct. 24th. I spent from seven to eight in advising and praying with the sincere, whom Mr. B—— has divided into classes, like ours. I read prayers at ten, and preached the one thing needful. The Lord filled my mouth with awakening words. I never spake more convincingly. All seemed to feel the sharp two-edged sword. The church was fuller than was ever known in a morning ; but in the afternoon it was crowded, every corner of it. Indeed the Scripture comes with double weight to me in a church. If any pity me for my bigotry, I pity them for their blind prejudice, which robs them of so many blessings.

“My text was, Lam. i. 12 : ‘Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger.’ The love of Christ crucified melted many hearts. I addressed myself by turns to the unawakened, the sincere, and the backsliders. For an hour God enabled me to speak with convincing and

comforting power. After the psalm I began again, and recapitulated the whole. Why does God always accompany the word with a double blessing, when preached in a church? Is it a sign that He is leaving, or that He is returning to, it? I have never been more assisted, since I left Bristol, than in this church, and Mr. Crook's, and Mr. Williamson's. Those of the Methodist Preachers who have faith and patience, may by and by have all the churches in England opened to them. I got another blessed, lively hour with the society. Then my whole stock of strength was exhausted.

"Oct. 25th. From six to seven I warned them, with many tears, tasting the bitterness of life, and the various ills we are still to be brought through. By eleven I returned to Manchester. Here I rejoiced to hear of the great good Mr. Whitefield has done in our societies. He preached as universally as my brother. He warned them everywhere against apostasy, and strongly insisted on the necessity of holiness *after* justification; illustrating it with this comparison: 'What good would the King's pardon do a poor malefactor, dying of a fever? So, notwithstanding you have received forgiveness, unless the disease of your nature be healed by holiness, ye can never be saved.' He beat down the separating spirit; highly commended the prayers and services of our Church; charged our people to meet their bands and classes constantly; and never to leave the Methodists, or God would leave them. In a word, he did his utmost to strengthen our hands; and deserves the thanks of all the churches for his abundant labour of love.

"I consulted the Leaders, what could be done for this unstable people. Richard Barlow and the rest ascribed their fickleness to their neglect of the means, particularly going to church; 'and when we advised them to it, they would answer us, *The Preachers do not advise us to go; neither do they go themselves.* Nay, some spoke against it, even Christopher Hopper, and those we most confided in.'

"Oct. 26th. My *former* friend, Mr. Clayton, read prayers at the old church with great solemnity. Richard Lucas, returned from Bolton, informed me, that John Hampson had been scattering his fire-brands there also, mocking the people for going to the church. What should hinder him from providing for himself and growing family, when opportunity

serves, by following Mr. Edwards's example? Or what security can we have that all the Preachers of his mind will not do the same?

"I spent the day in writing letters at sister Fanshaw's, whom I have received again into the fold. She had never left us in heart; but the cares of the world interrupted her outward fellowship. She seems now resolved to live and die with the poor afflicted people of God.

"I made up a quarrel of many months' standing between two sisters. The occasion of it was absolutely nothing. Such is the subtlety of our adversary.

"After preaching I examined three of the most wavering classes, and persuaded all, except the Dissenters, to go back to church and sacrament. The treacherous dealers have dealt very treacherously. Even *before* our departure the grievous wolves have entered in, not sparing the flock. How much more *after* our departure will men arise of themselves, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them!

"Oct. 27th. I preached from Rom. vi. 22: 'But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.' The Lord confirmed his word with a double blessing.

"I went with John Haughton to the old church, as usual. I preached at six; then met, and lovingly reprov'd, the society. I talked with more of the classes, and could find only two who would not take advice. Amalek had smote the hindmost; so I let Amalek take them: at least, while they prefer Mr. Ball to all the Methodists. The rest, a few Dissenters excepted, determined to live and die with us in the communion of the Church of England.

"Oct. 28th. Mr. Fanshaw dragged his feeble body to the early preaching. After all his wanderings and backslidings, we have received him again, as we trust, for ever. I preached at noon near Davyhulme, with great enlargement, to a simple-hearted people, who made me some amends for my long exercise at Manchester. I passed the remainder of the day with some Manchester friends, who are not of the society. The unsteadiness of our children has kept many from venturing among us.

"We began our watch-night exactly at seven, and concluded a quarter before eleven. Hereby we had more time,

with less inconvenience : and the whole congregation stayed from first to last. I expounded the ten virgins. The solemn power of God rested upon us. It was one of the happiest nights I have known.

“ I was constrained to write the following letters :—

“ ‘ TO MR. GRIMSHAW.

“ ‘ Manchester, Oct. 29th. I could not leave this poor shattered society so soon as I proposed. They have not had fair play from our sons in the Gospel ; but have been scattered by them as sheep upon the mountains. I have once more persuaded them to go to church and sacrament, and stay to carry them thither the next Lord’s day.

“ ‘ Nothing but grace can keep our children, after our departure, from running into a thousand sects, a thousand errors. Grace exercised, kept up, and increased, in the use of all the means, especially family and public prayer, and the sacrament, will keep them steady. Let us labour, while we continue here, to ground and build them up in the Scriptures, and all the ordinances. Teach them to handle well the sword of the Spirit, and the shield of faith. Should I live to see you again, I trust you will assure me, there is not a member of all the societies but reads the Scriptures daily, uses private prayer, joins in family and public worship, and communicates constantly. *In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.*’

“ ‘ TO MY BELOVED BRETHREN AT LEEDS.

“ ‘ Grace and peace be multiplied ! I thank my God on your behalf, for the grace which is given unto you, by which ye stand fast in one mind, and in one spirit. My Master, I am persuaded, sent me unto you at this time, to confirm your souls in the present truth, in your calling, in the old paths of Gospel ordinances. O that ye may be a pattern to the flock, for your unanimity and love ! O that ye may continue steadfast in the word, and in fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, (private, family, and public,) till we all meet around the great white throne !

“ ‘ I knew beforehand, that the Sanballats and Tobiahs would be grieved when they heard there was a man come, to seek the welfare of the Church of England. I expected they

would pervert my words, as if I should say, *The Church could save you*. So indeed you and they thought till I and my brethren taught you better, and sent you *in* and through all the means to Jesus Christ. But let not their slanders move you. Continue in the old ship. Jesus hath a favour for our Church, and is wonderfully visiting and reviving his work in her. It shall be shortly said, *Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her. Rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her.* (Isaiah lxvi. 10.)

“ ‘Blessed be God, ye see your calling. Let nothing hinder your going constantly to church and sacrament. Read the Scriptures daily in your families; and let there be a church in every house. The word is able to build you up; and if ye watch and pray always, ye shall be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man. Watch ye, therefore; stand fast in the faith; quit yourselves like men; be strong: let all your things be done in love.

“ ‘I rejoice in hope of presenting you all in that day. Look up; for the time of your eternal redemption draweth near.’

“As the people here leave work at twelve, we pitched upon that hour for our intercession. Many flocked to the house of mourning; and again the Lord was in the midst of us, making soft our hearts, and helping our infirmity to pray. We never want faith in praying for King George, and the Church of England.

“I recovered another straggler, as I do every day. The enemy has had a particular grudge to this society. His first messenger to them was a still sister, who abounded in visions and revelations. She came to them as in the name of the Lord, and forbad them to pray, sing, or go to church. Her extravagance, at last, opened their eyes, and delivered them from the snare of Mysticism. Then the Quakers, Predeterminarians, the Dippers, desired to have them, to sift them like wheat. They were afterwards thrust sore at by Mr. Bennet, Williams, Wheatley, Cudworth, Whitford, Ball. It is a miracle that two of them are left together: yet I am persuaded the third part will be brought through the fire.

“I examined more of the society. Most of them have known the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Several received it at church: one, in the Litany; another, in the Lord’s

prayer. With that word, 'Thy kingdom come,' Christ came into his heart. To many he has been made known in the breaking of bread.

"Oct. 30th. I dined with my candid friend and censor, Dr. Byrom. I stood close to Mr. Clayton in the church (as all the week past); but not a look would he cast towards me,

'So stiff was his parochial pride,'

and so faithfully did he keep a covenant with his eyes, not to look upon an old friend when called a Methodist.

"Sunday, Oct. 31st. I spake from five to seven with the rest of the classes. I left out Richard Glover, with his second wife, whom he has married, contrary to my advice, when his first was scarce cold in her grave. This scandalous practice, seldom named among the Heathen, should never be tolerated among Christians. I refused tickets to James and Elizabeth Ridgworth, till they should have enough of Mr. Ball. All the others were willing to follow my advice, and go constantly to church and sacrament. The Dissenters I sent to their respective meetings.

"At seven I found freedom to explain and enforce Isaiah lxiv. 5: 'In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.' It struck eight before I had got half through my subject. I breakfasted with a wanderer, and brought him back to his brethren. We were all at the old church; heard a good sermon from Mr. Clayton, on constant prayer; and joined to commemorate our dying Lord. Mr. M——, the senior Chaplain, sent for me up to the table, to administer first to me, with the other Clergy. I know not when I have received a greater blessing. The addition of fourscore communicants made them consecrate twice or thrice. A few of our Dissenting brethren communicated with us, and confessed to me afterwards, that the Lord met them at his table. It was a passover much to be remembered. We renewed our solemn covenant with God, and received fresh strength to run the race set before us.

"I dined at Adam Oldham's. The first *was* become last, but is now, I hope, becoming first again. I re-admitted both him and his wife into the society, with several others, who were fallen off.

"From the new church I walked to our crowded room, and

once more preached up the ordinances. Now the long-delayed blessing came. The skies, as it were, poured down righteousness. The words I spoke were not my own : therefore they made their way into many hearts. I received double power to exhort the society, now upwards of one hundred and fifty members, and believed for them, that they will henceforth walk in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

“ Nov. 1st. I met about ■ score of the Dissenters at four, and administered the Lord’s supper, to the great consolation of us all. I took my leave in the promise we wait for, ‘ I will bring a third part through the fire,’ and left a blessing behind me. Mr. Phillips attended me as far as Stone. The heavens smiled upon us all day.

“ Nov. 2d. I took horse at seven, and came safe by two to my old friend Francis Ward, in Wednesbury. At night I enforced the divine counsel, Isaiah xxvi. 20, 21 : ‘ Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee : hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.’ I found much freedom of love among my oldest children ; and they readily received my warnings ; which I repeated the next morning from Psalm xlv. I employed the morning in visiting the sick and shut up. Three or four stragglers I gathered in. I comforted our sister Spittle, left with five small children, by her husband, who was lately killed in a coal-pit, by the earth falling in. No death could be sudden to him. John Eaton was killed by falling into a pit. His daughter Edge told me she was warned by a repeated dream of his death, and begged him in vain not to go out that morning. While I was talking to her a woman came in, and accosted me in such a bold, violent manner, that I told her I did not like her spirit. This raised and called it forth. She quickly showed herself a Nicolaitan, by her boisterous, shocking, Antinomian assurance. I told her she was a false witness for God ; to which she horribly answered, ‘ If I am a liar, God himself is a liar.’ I shut up the discourse with, ‘ Get thee behind me, Satan !’

“ I was much assisted both at one and at seven, to warn

many listening souls of the flood coming. There was great life in the society. *All* the first, I am confident, shall not become last.

“ Nov. 4th. I left that promise upon their hearts, ‘I will bring the third part through the fire,’ and took horse with James Jones. I encouraged the remnant at Birmingham with the same words, and rode on to Worcester.

“ About a score I had left here some years ago ; twelve of whom are fallen off to the Quakers, seeking the living among the dead. I described the last times to between forty and fifty at sister Blackmore’s ; and it was a solemn time of refreshing. Nov. 5th. I set out before day with faithful John Dornford. I lodged at Cambridge Inn, and by eleven on Saturday morning, Nov. 6th, God brought me safe to my friends at Bristol.”

Here Mr. Charles Wesley’s private journal entirely fails us. Whether he continued it after this date is uncertain. If he did, no vestige of it appears to have been preserved.

This record which he has left of his visit to Yorkshire and Lancashire suggests many topics of remark. It is easy to perceive that the Travelling Preachers were very inadequately provided for, especially those of them who had families ; so that they were under strong inducements to retire from their itinerancy, and become Independent Ministers, whenever they met with a sufficient number of people who were willing to put themselves under their pastoral care. Not a few of the Methodists were inclined to do this, because they were denied the sacraments in their own meeting-houses, and were expected to attend divine worship, especially the Lord’s supper, in their parish churches, when they had little or no sympathy with the officiating Clergy, or the Clergy with them.

That some of the Preachers were in the habit of speaking disrespectfully of the Church and its Ministers, and thus strengthened among the people the feeling of alienation from the Establishment, there can be no doubt ; although there is every reason to believe that some of the accounts of this kind which were given to Mr. Charles Wesley were greatly exaggerated. The entire blame, however, did not rest with them ; for several of the Preachers were as sincere Churchmen as the

Wesleys themselves, and assiduously laboured to preserve the societies in their original position, as members of the Church of England. They regularly attended her services, and exhorted the people to follow their example.

Besides, it appears distinctly from Mr. Charles Wesley's own narrative, that Mr. Grimshaw's societies fell as readily into the hands of the Dissenters as did any of the societies that were solely under the care of the Methodist Preachers. This devout and zealous Clergyman was a Churchman after Charles Wesley's own heart. He itinerated extensively, and formed religious societies, which he regularly visited, particularly on the week-days. Those of them that lived contiguously to Haworth, so that they could attend his spiritual ministrations on the Lord's day, and receive the Lord's supper at his hands, gladly remained in union with the established Church; but many of those who had not these advantages, though urged by Mr. Grimshaw, whom they esteemed and tenderly loved as their father in the Lord, to seek edification in their own parish churches, declined his advice, and chose rather to become Dissenters, as did not a few of the people who were more immediately under the care of the Wesleys.

These facts appear fairly to justify the opinion, that had the Methodists continued permanently to act upon their original plan, compelling the people to receive the Lord's supper from the Clergy, or neglect one of the most sacred duties of their Christian profession, and refusing them the privilege of divine service in their own places of worship during the best part of the Sabbath, the same results would have followed. Methodism, ere this time, would have strengthened the cause of Dissent beyond all bounds, through a mistaken attempt to uphold the Church. Many of the Methodists of those times were made Dissenters, not by theories opposed to the episcopal form of church government, or to the union of the Church with the State; but by a regard for their own spiritual edification, for which, in many instances, the Church did not provide; her public and authorized functionaries lacking the true spirit of their sacred calling.

In the times of which we are speaking no plan was devised for perpetuating the union of the Methodist societies, and for

preserving the doctrine and discipline of the Connexion, when Mr. John Wesley should be no more; and Charles was apprehensive, that, whenever this event should happen, many of the Preachers would become Independent Ministers, and the societies Dissenting churches, with every variety of creed. His fears were justified by the unsettled state of the body, and by facts which had recently occurred. There was no power of discipline, but in Mr. John Wesley; and Mr. Bennet, Skelton, Edwards, and Whitford, after having been admitted into the itinerant ministry, had all raised Independent churches out of the societies, and thus provided for their future subsistence and comfort by a betrayal of their trust. If cases of this kind occurred with such frequency while Mr. Wesley lived, what could be expected after his decease, but a disruption of the societies which had been raised at a vast expense of labour, and personal suffering? It was "THE DEED OF DECLARATION," which was prepared several years after this period, giving an identity and a legal character to THE CONFERENCE, and investing that body with the power of government in the Connexion, that confirmed the union of the Preachers; and the concession of the sacraments, and of divine service in church-hours, by the Conference, that preserved the oneness and consequent strength of the societies. But these were arrangements of which none of the parties at this early period of Methodism had any conception. Mr. John Wesley directed all his energies to the increase and edification of the societies, discountenancing all direct separation from the Church; but still making strict Churchmanship subordinate to conversion from sin, and to personal piety. He durst not neglect that which he felt to be his present duty, because of any evils that might accidentally arise from his labours after his death. The advancement of spiritual religion, as the great end of human existence and redemption, and productive of a pure morality, was the one business of his life. The ultimate separation of his societies from the Church, or their union with it, he left to God. Unless the people were made holy, he was assured that they must for ever perish; but he had not the same assurance respecting their nonconformity to any particular system of church order. Charles was equally alive to the necessity of entire holiness, as a qualification without which no man shall

see the Lord ; but he often spoke and acted as if he thought Churchmanship essential to piety and salvation.

According to Mr. Charles Wesley's account, the Methodist society in Manchester had been tried by "false brethren," and erroneous tenets, almost beyond example. The Quakers, Quietists, Predestinarians, and Baptists, had all attempted to gain proselytes from among them. The deserters, Bennet and Whitford, both endeavoured to unsettle the minds of their former friends. Williams, Cudworth, Wheatley, and Ball followed in their rear. Williams, it will be recollected, was the man who basely attempted in London to ruin Mr. Charles Wesley's moral character, by the propagation of the most wicked falsehoods, because Charles would not assist him in his endeavours to obtain episcopal ordination. Cudworth, who had separated from Mr. Whitefield, was in doctrine a thorough Antinomian, and in spirit bitter, self-complacent, and contemptuous. Wheatley was as corrupt in doctrine as Cudworth ; and his morals were as bad as his creed. Roger Ball was perhaps the worst person in the unholy fraternity. He contended that a man who possesses faith has a right to everything in the world ; so that in him theft is no sin, if he really need the things which he steals. Other principles he held which are too disgusting to be specified. Mr. Charles Wesley, therefore, who knew the man, and his communications, did nothing more than his duty, when he resisted this "messenger of Satan," who came with a smooth tongue, and all the deceivableness of unrighteousness. Ball and Wheatley as richly deserved to be punished by the civil Magistrate, as did ever culprit that was publicly whipped or placed in the pillory. By a whining softness of manner they tried, where their own characters were unknown, to obtain a morsel of bread among religious people ; and "destroyed souls for the sake of dishonest gain." These immoral men, the slaves of brutal appetite, hung upon the skirts of the Methodist societies, as unclean birds follow in the rear of an army. Nor is it any uncommon thing, "when the sons of God assemble," for "Satan also to appear among them." In the apostolic times bad men laboured to counteract the effects of evangelical preaching ; and when it pleased God to revive Christianity in its life and spirit, by the labours of the Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield, emissaries of the wicked one exerted themselves

to obstruct the spread of practical holiness. A few of the Manchester Methodists were perverted in the day of trial; but others "hated" both "the deeds" and tenets "of the Nicolaitanes." They "tried those who said they were Apostles, and were not;" and having "found them liars," spurned both them and their polluting errors.

The account which Mr. Charles Wesley has given of Mr. Clayton is amusing. This gentleman was one of the Oxford Methodists, and afterwards a Fellow of the Collegiate church in Manchester. In attending the daily prayers, Charles placed himself as near his old friend as he could; but not a look would the unbending Ecclesiastic cast upon his former associate, who had now rendered himself vile by assuming the character of a field-Preacher. When Charles Stuart arrived in Manchester, in the Rebellion of 1745, Mr. Clayton paid his respects to this exiled claimant of the British crown. For this act of disloyalty to the House of Brunswick the Jacobitical Clergyman was for some time placed under suspension by his Bishop. He was stiff in his Churchmanship, but an upright and respectable man. By the senior inhabitants of Manchester he is still remembered. They speak of his dignified gait, and enormous wig, as well as of the deep seriousness and the canonical regularity with which he performed his clerical duties.

CHAPTER XXI.

It is generally understood that after Mr. Charles Wesley had returned from Yorkshire and Lancashire, in the autumn of 1756, he ceased to intinerate as a Preacher of the Gospel. Whether this opinion is strictly correct or not, we have no means of knowing. Certain, however, it is, that, if he did at all continue his labours as a Travelling Preacher, his journeys became less and less frequent and extensive, till his ministrations were chiefly confined to Bristol and London, with occasional visits to some intermediate and surrounding places.

The reasons for this change in his practice have never been fully disclosed. It is probable that they were various; but in the absence of all direct evidence, we have nothing but conjecture to offer. Not a document in his handwriting, bearing the date of 1757, when he is said to have become stationary, can be found; nor even the fragment of a letter, of the same period, addressed to him by his brother: so that no original testimony bearing upon the question can be adduced. Mr. Berridge, the eccentric Vicar of Everton, who was partly contemporary with him, attributes the cessation of his itinerancy to his marriage: but this could only be one among other causes; for he had now been married more than seven years; and during this period he had travelled much, sometimes with his wife, and at other times in her absence, although his journeys were not so long and widely circuitous as they formerly were. A regard for the feelings and the society of his wife, with the care of his children, doubtless contributed to detain him at home; yet the principal cause of his settlement, in all probability, was, the state of feeling which existed in many of the societies and Preachers with regard to the national Church. He deemed it a matter of absolute duty, that they should all remain in strict communion with her. His brother thought separation highly inexpedient; but he could not view it in that heinous light in which it appeared to Charles. In reference to this subject he was therefore inclined to moderate counsels, and satisfied himself with gentleness and per-

suasion in dealing with those who were disaffected towards the Establishment; while Charles was prepared for the adoption of strong and compulsive measures. Here was therefore an obvious difficulty. Charles could not visit the principal societies in Great Britain and Ireland as a mere friend, or as one of the Preachers. He must appear as possessing a co-ordinate authority with his brother; and as their views differed so very materially, they could not, in regulating the affairs of the societies, act in perfect concert. Hence he appears to have thought it the best course for him to retire, and leave the people and Preachers generally in the hands of John, whose talents for government were of the highest order. Charles could write hymns with a facility and a power which no man of his age could equal; and few could surpass him as an awakening and effective Preacher; but he had no aptitude for controlling and harmonizing the discordant spirits of men. For the maintenance of discipline in cases of difficulty his faculties and habits were not at all suited. His uprightness, generosity, and the kindness of his heart were unquestionable; but his impetuosity created prejudice, and left a soreness in the minds which his brother could easily conciliate and direct. Though he ceased to travel, his union with the Methodists remained to the end of his life; and he rendered most important service to the cause of true religion, though in a more limited sphere than he had been accustomed to occupy. He still cultivated his talent for poetry; and the numerous publications which he sent forth into the world possessed a rich and substantial value.

The societies of London and Bristol were highly favoured in retaining the ministrations of such a man: but the loss to the other societies was great; for he usually carried a blessing with him wherever he went. Few men in modern times have more fully exemplified the peculiar characteristics of the eloquent Apollos. He was indeed "fervent in spirit," and "mighty in the Scriptures;" and by the resistless energy of his preaching, he "mightily convinced" the adversaries of Christ, with formalists and triflers, of every description. His power in prayer was equally striking.

The effect of his retirement from the itinerancy was the reverse of favourable, so far as he was personally concerned. His mind was naturally inclined to view things in a gloomy

and discouraging aspect; but amidst the excitement, the change, and the toil of the itinerant ministry, he had no time to be melancholy, however he might be constitutionally disposed to indulge that morbid feeling. The manifest success which attended his preaching filled him with unutterable gratitude; and while all his powers were engaged in his work, he enjoyed a heaven upon earth. When he ceased to travel he was at leisure to cherish his painful forebodings; croakers and busy-bodies tormented him with letters, complaining of the ambition of the Preachers, and of the alienation of the people from the Church; and the pernicious leaven of Mysticism, which he had imbibed at Oxford, and from which his mind had never been thoroughly purged, regained its ascendancy over him, so as often to interfere with his spiritual enjoyments: yet his piety and integrity of purpose were unimpeachable. Often was he in agonies of fear lest the Methodists should leave the Church, when he and his brother were dead; while John was as happy as an angel, flying through the three kingdoms, sounding the trumpet of the world's jubilee, and joyfully witnessing, every successive year, the steady advancement of the work of God.

In the course of the year 1758 Mr. John Wesley published "Reasons against ■ Separation from the Church of England;" copied chiefly from the manuscript treatise on that subject, which Mr. Walker had advised him not to publish. The "Reasons" are twelve in number, and are proposed in a spirit the most mild and conciliatory. Their character is clearly indicated by the sentence which introduces them: "Whether it be *lawful* or no, (which itself may be disputed, being not so clear a point as some may imagine,) it is by no means *expedient*, for us to separate from the Church of England." To the "Reasons" are subjoined several seasonable advices, with answers to various pleas and objections. "We ought never," it is said, "to make her blemishes matter of diversion, but rather of solemn sorrow before God. We ought never to talk ludicrously of them; no, nor at all, without clear necessity. Rather, we should conceal them, as far as ever we can, without bringing guilt upon our own conscience. And we should all use every rational and scriptural means, to bring others to the same temper and behaviour." "It would be well for every Methodist Preacher, *who has no*

scruple concerning it, to attend the service of the Church as often as he conveniently can."

Such was the moderation of John's counsels. Charles took higher ground. He affixed the following postscript to his brother's pamphlet:—"I think myself bound in duty to add my testimony to my brother's. His twelve reasons against our ever separating from the Church of England are mine also. I subscribe to them with all my heart. Only, with regard to the first, I am quite clear that it is neither *expedient* nor *lawful* for me to separate; and I never had the least inclination or temptation so to do. My affection for the Church is as strong as ever; and I clearly see my calling; which is, to live and die in her communion. This, therefore, I am determined to do, the Lord being my helper.

"I have subjoined the Hymns for the Lay-Preachers; still farther to secure this end, to cut off all jealousy and suspicion from our friends, or hope from our enemies, of our having any design of ever separating from the Church. I have no secret reserve, or distant thought of it. I never had. Would to God all the Methodist Preachers were, in this respect, like-minded with

"CHARLES WESLEY."

The hymns here referred to are seven in number; and most of them are of considerable length. They were appended to Mr. Wesley's "Reasons," when published in a separate pamphlet; and are strongly descriptive of the fallen state of the established Church, with regard to doctrine, discipline, and morals, and of that spirit of zeal, devotion, and self-denial by which the early Methodist Preachers were distinguished. The writer speaks of those irregular Evangelists as being "not of the sacred order;" yet he distinctly acknowledges their divine call to the work in which they were employed.

In the spring of this year, 1758, Mr. Charles Wesley had a severe fall, from which, at the time, dangerous consequences were apprehended. With the particulars of the case we are not acquainted. He refers to it in the following letter to his friend William Perronet, a son of the Vicar of Shoreham, and a medical practitioner. From the effects of this disaster he seems to have thought that he should never fully recover.

"Bristol, March 25th, 1758. Dear Will,—I expected to have

seen you before this time; but a severe fall has stopped me for a season. Mr. Ford blooded me the next day; and Dr. Middleton, and a troop of female surgeons, joined in consultation about me. I cannot stoop without pain; neither do I expect a perfect cure in this world. So much for my (important) self.

“Your last but one mentions ‘business, and variety of company, as a remedy for your dejection of spirits.’ Strange that one who has tasted the true medicine of life should talk so idly! If you have forsaken the Fountain, in vain do you hew out broken cisterns. They can hold no water. Despair of help, till you recover your first love. Acquaint yourself again with Christ, and be at peace. I pray God deliver you from every show and shadow of happiness, and keep you miserable, till you see and find happiness in Him!”

A few days after this letter was written Mr. Charles Wesley took his final leave of that very surprising man, Thomas Walsh, who passed through Bristol, on his way from London to Ireland, there to suffer and die. As he has been subjected to unmerited censure, as being one direct cause of those distressing mental conflicts which Mr. Walsh endured in his last illness, it will be requisite carefully to examine the facts of the case. Those conflicts are most affectingly described by Mr. Walsh’s biographer; and the reasons of them are thus stated by the Rev. Melvill Horne:—

“Soon after his ordination, Mr. Fletcher preached a sermon at West-street chapel, in which he made some remarks on the dying hours of good men. He supposed, that some comparatively weak believers might die most blessedly; and some strong ones, for the farther purification of their faith, or for reasons inscrutable to us, might have tremendous conflicts. At the meeting of the bands, that excellent man, Mr. Thomas Walsh, opposed this doctrine, and told him, he thought it bore hard against God’s justice, faithfulness, and covenant love to his servants. Mr. Fletcher modestly observed, that God’s wisdom was sovereign and inscrutable; and though he was sorry he had given offence, yet he could not, with a good conscience, retract what he had said. With some degree of warmth, (the constitutional failing of Mr. Walsh,) he replied, ‘Be it done unto you according to your faith; and be it done unto me

according to mine !' Here the matter rested. In about two years Mr. Walsh died ; and so very severe were his dying conflicts, that they produced a very strong sensation among his brethren, and in none more than in Mr. Fletcher. In April, 1759, he wrote thus to Mr. Charles Wesley :—' With a heart bowed down with grief, and eyes bathed in tears, occasioned by our late heavy loss, I mean the death of Mr. Walsh, I take my pen to pray you to intercede for me. What ! that sincere, laborious, and zealous servant of God ! was he saved only as by fire ? And was not his prayer heard till the twelfth hour was just expired ? O where shall I appear ? I who am an unprofitable servant ? Would to God my eyes were fountains of water, to weep for my sins ! Would to God I might pass the rest of my days in crying, *Lord, have mercy upon me !* All is vanity,—grace, talents, labours, if we compare them with the mighty stride we have to take into eternity.'

" His own sermon, Mr. Walsh's remarks, and distressing end, made a lasting impression on Mr. Fletcher's mind. Often did he speak of it with amazement to Mrs. Fletcher ; and would conclude with saying, ' Be it our care to lead holy lives. The comfort of our deaths we must leave with the Lord, who will do all things well.'

" I need not advert to the triumphant end with which the Lord saw good to crown his humble faith ; but in justice to that wonderful man, Mr. Walsh, who, in the short space of nine years, from nineteen to twenty-eight, ran a race of piety and ministerial labour which shames ninety-nine out of a hundred of Christ's Ministers, I must undraw a veil which, for certain reasons, Mr. James Morgan thought prudent to draw over the closing hours of his friend, that some clue may be given to what appears inexplicably mysterious. And, no doubt, the knowledge Mr. Fletcher afterwards had of the causes which led to, and in some degree explained, the conflicts his friend suffered, did greatly lessen his astonishment.

" Mr. Walsh had offered his hand to a pious woman, among the Methodists, whom he considered as a widow. She respectfully declined it, saying, though she had not seen her husband for seven years, and had some reason for thinking him dead, yet until she had better authority to go on, she deemed it her duty not to alter her state. In this very sufficient reason Mr. Walsh cheerfully acquiesced. And here the

business should have rested. But unhappily the good woman could not keep her own secret. She imparted it to Mr. Wesley, who hated all secrets, and could keep none. Michael Fenwick spread it abroad; and circumstances were so misrepresented, that Thomas Walsh fell into great and undeserved reproach. His preachings, fastings, hard studies, and the incessant labours of a mind which, like a sharp sword, cuts its scabbard, had brought him far into a consumption. He wished to breathe his native air, and for a while to repose, until he could again resume his labours. He was to embark at Bristol. After preaching till he was bathed in perspiration, Mr. Charles Wesley, to whom every exaggerated report had been made, took him out to walk in private, in a keen east wind. There he got a violent cold, and was distressed beyond measure to be told, that his conduct, in the transaction I have reported, had done more harm to religion than his life and labours had honoured it. Under these trying circumstances of mind, and dangerous state of health, he embarked for Ireland. There he found very unkind family friends, who would dispute with a dying man. His Physicians proved unskilful; and as they could do nothing for him, they declined doing what he proposed. Depressed by disease, labouring under unmerited reproach, severely judged by some he best loved, and grieved to the soul to think religion should be stabbed through his side, his faith fainted, his patience forsook him, and he complained bitterly, ‘his Physicians were ignorant, and his friends cruel.’ Now was the hour of the power of darkness. Satan, who had often fallen before the lightning of his doctrine, and who could not stand against his praying faith, rallied his broken powers, and led them, reinforced by the black troops of death, to a final conflict.

“The God of patient Job permitted his malice to accuse, and his subtlety for a while to stagger, his dying servant. Driven to the brink of despair, his eye was still raised to Him who was lifted up to draw all men to Him. Again joy beamed from his eye, and lighted up his ghastly countenance. He sprang up in his bed, clasped his hands together, and exclaimed, ‘My beloved is mine, and I am his!’ Thus died this brave soldier of Jesus Christ.”*

* Investigation of the Definition of Justifying Faith, &c., pp. 104—106.

Such is Mr. Horne's account ; and in the absence of contrary evidence, its general truth may be admitted ; especially as Mr. John Wesley says, " There were some circumstances not commonly known, which easily account for the darkness he went through before he went to paradise."* But the view which it gives of Mr. Charles Wesley's conduct in the affair is unquestionably at variance with fact. The most fastidious censor could not find in the part which Mr. Walsh acted any just ground of blame. He understood that the lady was a widow ; and when he was told that he was in error, he immediately acquiesced in her decision, and withdrew his suit. What could he do more ? To reprove a dying man, who had long given proof of the utmost purity of character, for a mere mistake, as if he had been guilty of immorality, would have been an outrage upon every principle of charity, justice, and humanity. Happily for Mr. Charles Wesley's memory, we have direct proof that he did not treat his afflicted friend in the cruel and unfeeling manner which is imputed to him. On the contrary, as might have been expected, considering the kindness of his heart, he did every thing in his power to soothe and cheer the suffering man, whose extraordinary abilities, and high moral worth, he duly appreciated. During Mr. Walsh's stay in Bristol, he showed him every mark of attention and tender sympathy ; he corresponded with him in the same spirit after Mr. Walsh had gone to Ireland ; and, by his affectionate letters, he greatly alleviated the pain and anguish which he could not remove. Of this we have the most unexceptionable proof,—the testimony of Mr. Walsh himself. Two letters, written by him from Ireland, and addressed to Mr. Charles Wesley, have been preserved, as if on purpose to disprove Mr. Horne's injurious allegation ; and as they illustrate this part of Mr. Walsh's personal history, as well as that of his friend, they are here given entire. The first was written just after the afflicted man had left Bristol ; the other, six months later.

" Cork, April 17th, 1758. Rev. and very dear Sir,—God has all power ; therefore we arrived safe here on the Saturday next after I left Bristol. We were tossed with tempest ; I may say, ' a day and a night in the deep ; ' for the sea ran

* Works, vol. xii., p. 189.

over the vessel. But, as you prayed, ‘Jesus was in the ship.’ He was my support, and did strengthen and comfort my heart. O that I could praise and love Him, and live more to the glory of his name ! Trials make Christ precious to us.

“Dear Sir, how shall I sufficiently thank you for all your kindness ? I know it is God that gave us union and love. To the prayer of faith nothing is impossible. I trust love will abound.

“Mr. Hopper is here, and is well, and God has prospered him. Mr. Wesley is still in Dublin, but intends to leave it next week.

“It would give me a singular pleasure to hear from you, and to hear dear Mrs. Wesley and the child are well. When you write to her, I request you would give my best respects, and to any of those good friends I saw at your house, especially Mrs. Grinfield. I find such union with Bristol people as I never found before ; and as to London saints, they are written in my mind. Yet it is very uncertain whether I shall see them till the resurrection of the just. If you please to write to me, direct for me at Mr. Thomas Jones’s, Merchant, in Cork. Dear Sir, requesting your prayers and advice, I am

“Your truly affectionate and dutiful son.”

“Rossmead, Oct. 9th, 1758. Rev. and very dear Sir,—Your letter was very refreshing to me ; and while I read it the power of God rested on me. But truly I was ashamed that you should speak in such language to me. It is certain I pray earnestly for you, being moved thereto, not by a mere sense of duty, but by hearty love, and a remembrance of your kindness.

“My spiritual state is this : First, I have a constant assurance of the favour of God. Secondly, A steadfast confidence that my present afflictions will work together for my good. Thirdly, That whenever God calls me hence, Jesus will receive my spirit. Fourthly, I am tried to the uttermost. All the grace God has given me can hardly bear the pains I feel. Indeed my soul is often sorrowful. I grieve, though not enough, that my love to God is so little ; and that I do not desire more earnestly to be with Christ. Yet I live by faith, and constantly pray for submission and thankfulness. In prayer my soul is often enlarged ; and I am led much to

pray that the God of patience and consolation would give all his children to be like-minded : I mean chiefly, that they should love one another. Ah, Lord ! why do not thy children love and agree, as thou hast given them commandment, and even prayed that they should ? When will thy prayer be answered ? Well, blessed Jesus, we shall agree in thy presence.

“ It is long since I wrote a letter ; but you have constrained me. I am worse and worse, as to my disorder. I have a violent cough, profuse night sweats, a high and almost continual fever, wind in my stomach : finally, every part is pained in its turn. But to this day the Lord has not shown me clearly whether this sickness be unto death. O that I may be always ready !

“ My strength fails me. I can only add, a thousand loves and respects to my friends at Bristol. Upon you, my dear Sir, and the kind wife of your bosom, and all that belong to you, may the blessing of God for ever abide ! Shall I hear again from you ? I am, Rev. Sir,

“ Your affectionate son.

“ P. S. Dear Sir, excuse my putting you to cost. I could not get a frank here ; and I was afraid if I sent the letter by London, you would not receive it for a long time, if at all. O forget not to pray for me ! I believe really you do make intercession for me. I often, with pleasure, told my friends, Mr. Charles Wesley prays for me ; yea, and sings a verse for me too.”

Such was the grateful and devout language of this great man, drawn forth by the Christian affection and sympathy of Mr. Charles Wesley. The statement of Mr. Horne, viewed in connexion with these letters, affords a striking illustration of the uncertainty of oral tradition, especially when various parties are concerned in the transmission of a report. That Thomas Walsh’s distress, in his last illness, was at all occasioned by Charles Wesley’s severity and unkindness, is here positively disproved. He was one of the truest friends on whom Thomas Walsh could rely in the hour of trial.

This holy and learned man lingered till the month of April following, when he slept in Jesus. A few friends prayed with him on the Sunday evening ; and when they had concluded, he desired to be left alone, in order, as he said, “ to

meditate a little." They withdrew ; and he remained deeply recollected for some time. He then burst out, in a sort of transport, and pronounced with a dying voice, but with joy unutterable, " He is come ! He is come ! My Beloved is mine, and I am His ! His for ever ! " In uttering these words he resigned his soul to the Lord Jesus, in the twenty-eighth year of his age.

How deeply Mr. Charles Wesley was affected by the death of Thomas Walsh, is apparent from the three hymns which he wrote on the occasion, and in which he describes the history and character of the deceased. In the second of these are the following remarkable stanzas :—

Did he not labour day and night,
In ministerial works employ'd ?
His sweet relief, his whole delight,
To search the oracles of God ;
To listen at the Master's feet,
To catch the whispers of his grace,
And long for happiness complete,
And gasp to see his open face !

Did he not triumph in the cross,
Its prints as on his body show,
Lavish of life for Jesu's cause,
Whose blood so free for him did flow ?
He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of its swift decline ;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To' attain the righteousness divine.

Impatient to be truly great,
Ambitious of a crown above,
He coveted the highest seat,
He ask'd the grace of perfect love :
He ask'd, alas ! but knew not then
The purport of his own desire,
How deep that cup of sacred pain,
How searching that baptismal fire !

Tried to the last, but not forsook,
But honour'd with distinguish'd grace,
Heavenward he cast a dying look,
And saw once more his Saviour's face :
" He's come ! my well-beloved," he said,
" And I am his, and He is mine ! "
He spake, he gazed, he bow'd his head,
And sunk into the arms divine !

A few months after he had parted from Thomas Walsh in Bristol, Mr. Charles Wesley paid a visit to the surviving members of his brother Samuel's family, in Devonshire, preaching, with his wonted energy and spirit, at various places, both in going and returning. His brother's widow was now dead; but she had left a daughter, who lived in Barnstaple, and was married to an Apothecary of the name of Earle. He gives an interesting account of this journey, and of its results, in the following letters addressed to his wife. It would appear that he was still suffering from the effects of the dangerous fall which he had in the spring. The narrative is incomplete, referring to a former letter, which has not been preserved. His son Charles, who is mentioned in the correspondence, was now about nine months old; and his daughter Patty, to whom a touching reference is made, had been dead more than three years. The letter, it will be perceived, was written in Barnstaple, but relates several occurrences which took place before his arrival in that town.

“Barnstaple, Sept. My dear Sally waits for the continuation of my history. I think it left off on Saturday morning, Sept. 2d. After preaching I breakfasted at one Miss Parkhouse's, a simple, zealous disciple in her first love. I spent the day in my Prophet's chamber, and preached again at night with more enlargement.

“Sunday, Sept. 3d. My text in the morning was, ‘In those is continuance, and we shall be saved.’ Almost all the society met me at the Lord's table. The Minister administered to me first, as if he wanted to gain the hearts of our people. Our room was too narrow for us in the evening; so we borrowed the market-house, which is capable of holding thousands. Thousands attended gladly while I explained and applied, ‘The poor have the Gospel preached to them.’ My mouth was opened to make known the mystery of salvation by grace. Another lively hour I passed with the society, and with all our absent-present brethren. I believe you had a good time at Bristol and London; for we seemed all to drink into one spirit.

“Sept. 4th. After preaching and breakfast, I set out at eight, with a guide, for Barnstaple, the weather flattering us with a fair day. I rode a Spanish pace for the first mile: then the sky was overcast, and the rain returned. My com-

panion would have enticed me on ; but I turned my mare's head, and marched back as sober and contented as you could wish. There were scattered showers most of the day. I got two more opportunities of preaching ; and,

“Sept. 5th, took horse at seven, to make a second effort. The clouds gathered, and kept us in awe for the two first hours. To escape a shower we baited at a little alehouse ; gave a word of advice to the poor ignorant landlord and his daughter ; and went on our way, (and a vile one it was,) without any more rain, till we came, between twelve and one, to North-Moulton, twenty measured miles from Tiverton.

“I dined on a dish of tea, which I had taken care to bring with me, and shut myself up till night. Mr. Robarts was the first that planted the Gospel in this place. The 'Squire and the Minister, as usual, were the chief persecutors. Both people and Preacher were cruelly treated, but conquered all by love and patience. The captain of the mob cut his own throat ; but lived long enough to repent, and ask pardon of the poor injured people. I preached to them the pure Gospel, with more comfort and life than I have done since I left Bristol. Not a word seemed to be lost upon them. The seed fell upon good ground. I had a feast with them ; so I wanted none elsewhere. My friendly old host gave us the best he had ; but the bacon and hen were such, that my teeth could not penetrate them. However, our clean warm bed made us amends.

“Sept. 6th. I found the room full at five, and exhorted them to come boldly to the throne of mercy and grace. My throat was a little sore through last night's straining. I applied a flannel plaster, (some of what you furnished me with,) and watched my time for setting out. Twice or thrice I ordered the horses back to the stable, as the clouds gathered again. At last we mounted, and rode through the town *almost* ; for near the end of it the rain began, and drove me back. I made another attempt, and got so far as to cut off my own retreat. We were got half way to South-Moulton, three measured miles from North-Moulton, when the rain forced us through. I stood up in my stirrups, and ventured a trot. We put in at a brother's, in the town, till it was fair ; then rode on towards Barnstaple, ten miles distant. In less than two miles' riding a heavy shower drove us to

seek shelter at an alehouse. Two miles farther a second storm threatened to wet us to the skin. We fled toward the park-keeper's lodge, near Lord Fortescue's; the woman inviting us in. My mare took possession of the porch. Our hostess had just lost her husband. I gave something to one of her four little children, and a word of advice to the widow. We had only one more bait in the way to Barnstaple, which we reached by noon.

"I changed my clothes at a public-house, opposite Mr. Earle's, who set out in the morning, I heard, for the country. When I inquired after my niece, at her house, they informed me she was brought to bed on Sunday of a still-born son. I was unwilling to let her know of my coming, for fear of hurrying her; but the nurse would tell her; and she immediately sent for me up. The last time I had seen her was at Tiverton, seventeen years ago, just after her father's death. She was then twelve years old. I knew her by him. She perfectly remembered me, and was overjoyed at the sight of me. Three years after she had lived with her mother; five years more with a Clergyman's daughter, who made a gain of her, and might have ruined her, if Mr. Earle had not been sent by Providence for her rescue. She has borne eight children, all dead but one girl. Two years ago she was delivered of a dead child; and the next day, her son of seven years old, a most promising child, was taken from the evil. She has known affliction; and it has not been lost upon her. I forced myself away from her in a quarter of an hour, to spare her weakness.

"By this time Mr. Earle was returned, hearing accidentally of my arrival. Your letter had given the first alarm. He was most hospitably glad to see me, (the first of his wife's relations, on the father's side,) and sent over for my things. I was much pleased with him, (as frank and open as his father-in-law,) and more with his little girl. She is past seven; full of life and sense; and as fond of me, after an hour's acquaintance—as I of her.

"I made several short visits to Phill the elder, who was never so well in any labour as this. I was astonished to see her, comparing her with you; though she is very far from a strong woman; about as thin and *handsome* as her father. Imagine you saw me between my child and grandchild; and

bring us all three with a wish to Bristol. She was very inquisitive after her aunt there, and her small cousin. We are very happy together. She gathers strength every hour: she *says*, through the sight of me.

“Friday night. I have now had several conferences with my niece and her husband, and several walks with him. Their frights and prejudices vanish apace. They even venture to take the lion by the beard. I pray with the family morning and evening; and am quite convinced, God has sent me to this house.

“My sister passed her three years of widowhood in a house by herself, pining continually after her old companion, till she overtook him in paradise. She died in perfect peace. So did her mother, past fourscore, a little after her. Her departure was quite triumphant. Such, I trust, will be the end of my Sally’s parents: such your end, and mine.

“If our dear Mrs. Davis is come to die with us, give my love and blessing to her, and tell her I hope to share in her triumph over our last enemy; and to follow her shortly, if it be our Lord’s will that I should see her safe landed before me.

“Remember me to all friends, particularly John Nelson, and Mrs. Vigor, Grinfield, Farley, Brown, James, Stonehouse. Direct your next to me at Tiverton. Next week I expect to spend thereabouts. The nearer I come, the plainer I shall see my way to Bristol, which I do not hope to reach before the end of the month. My niece sends her affectionate duty to you, and is quite ready, were she able, to accept of your invitation. Next summer, if we live so long, I have *half* promised to *fetch* her to you.

“This country is worse than Wales for posts. I suppose a letter from you is waiting for me at Tiverton. Send me word when my brother re-visits you.

“I dreamed last night that Sarah had let Charles fall, and killed him. You will look to him, I think; but for his sake and mine look to yourself also.

“Mr. and Mrs. Earle greet you. May the Lord bless my dearest Sally! May the good Shepherd gently lead her, and carry her and her ewe lamb in his bosom! Adieu!”

“Barnstaple, Sept. 10th. My dearest Partner,—I am got into a conjurer’s circle, or enchanted castle, and can find no

way out. The stronger my niece grows, the more conversible, and harder to be left. I have been deeply engaged in my brother's manuscript poems, but want time to copy them. However, one I send you, as a sample, on the death of his child.

‘Adieu, my Nutty, dearly bought,
 I envy thee, but pity not ;
 Happy the port betime to gain,
 Secure from shame, and guilt, and pain.
 No lover false thy youth beguiled ;
 No wicked and unthankful child
 Tortured with grief thy riper years,
 Or crush'd with woes thy hoary hairs.
 O bless'd, beyond misfortune blest,
 And safe in never-ending rest !
 Let me, if not for thee, my dear,
 Drop for myself a secret tear.
 For me—my best of life-time knows
 Decreasing friends, and growing foes :
 To those whom most I wish'd to please,
 The cause of pining and disease,
 Alive, in storms and tempests tost,
 And dead—perhaps for ever lost !
 If doom'd to feel eternal pain,
 Never to meet with thee again,
 Though midst the pangs of stinging thought,
 And bodings of despair, if aught
 Could make me pleased with life to be,
 'Tis, that I being gave to thee !’

“You will see how exactly this suits me, if you only put Patty instead of Nutty. I cannot but believe it will not be long before I overtake my brother. Therefore was I constrained to come hither, at this time, as a debt I owed him. I shall last as long as I can ; that you may be assured of, seeing it is my duty to God and you.

“For my sake you must be equally careful. Woe be to you, if I find you fallen away ! If you starve yourself, you starve my child unborn. Charles I am under no concern for.

“The people of this place are abundantly civil, not excepting even the Clergy. I am invited by them also, but decline visiting, as I can neither smoke, nor drink, nor talk their language. Yesterday I could not refuse drinking tea with an old friend and relation of my brother and sister, whose

grandfather, like mine, was turned out on St. Bartholomew's day. She and several others desire to hear me preach; but preaching is not my present business.

"I have been at church, but not much edified. O what a famine of the word! How long shall God's people perish for lack of knowledge!

"This day three weeks I hope to spend with my dearest Sally, Becky, and Betsy; to *say* nothing of Charley, as I *think* nothing of him. Yet if he has got a tooth, tell me so in a line to Tiverton.

"Phill dined up with us in her chamber to-day. She sends her duty and love, longing to see you. Providence will, I believe, bring you together, although I see not when or how.

"I am engaged by promise to bestow a week upon the societies at and near Tiverton. Another week I allow for my journey thence to Bristol. Two days it will cost me to get to Tiverton from this place.

"You will be glad to hear I have quite recovered my first day's ride, and am now doubly careful not to *run* into the same inconvenience. My few remaining days I would willingly spend in peace and retirement, and

‘Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore
Of that vast ocean I must sail so soon.’

My Sally will help me forward. O let us be diligent, to be found of Him in peace, without spot, and blameless! Adieu!"

"Tiverton, Sept. 12th. My dearest Creature,—Yesterday morning I hardly tore myself from poor Phill. Her husband walked with me a mile, and parted with tears. He also has a very tender heart. They will not be easy till we meet again, either at Bristol or Barnstaple.

"They forced a servant upon me as far as North-Moulton, fifteen miles from Barnstaple. We marched with great deliberation; and whenever we ventured upon a trot, I rode standing. The afternoon was all my own. At night I declared the end of our Lord's coming, that we 'might have life.' The door was again wide open. I bestowed an hour upon my host and his family, in singing, conference, and prayer.

“Tuesday morning. I rose at four, preached at five, set out after breakfast, and reached this place, twenty miles from North-Moulton, by one. God be praised for your health continued.”

From various passages in these letters, it is manifest, that the object of Mr. Charles Wesley's journey to Devonshire, at this time, was not merely to show his respect for his brother's memory, and his affection for his niece and her family, but also the edification and enlargement of the societies in various places. Hence he spent considerable time in preaching to them, and in giving them such advice and encouragement as their cases seemed to require. Why he declined to preach at Barnstaple, does not appear. On the Sabbath he attended divine worship at the church, but derived little benefit from what he heard there. Yet he was grieved whenever the Methodists absented themselves from such ministrations. Notwithstanding the civility of the Barnstaple Clergy, he had no oneness of heart with them, and therefore declined their society. Upon the same principle those Methodists acted, who desired to receive the Lord's supper at the hands of their own Preachers, and to attend their own places of worship only on the Sabbath-day.

Neither the delights of social intercourse, nor the spiritual prosperity of his own people, could induce Mr. Charles Wesley to forget the public welfare, and the cause of religion generally. England was still at war with France, and Austria and France with Prussia; so that while domestic tranquillity was menaced, the Protestant interest on the European continent was in imminent peril. Notwithstanding the revival of primitive Christianity which was in progress, the body of the Clergy yet slept at the post of duty, ungodliness everywhere prevailed, and the people perished in sin and ignorance. In the principal Methodist societies a meeting was held every Friday, at twelve o'clock, for the purpose of interceding with God in behalf of the church, the nation, and the world; and apparently to assist the good people who took part in these pious services, and to strengthen the principles of Christian patriotism and philanthropy everywhere, he published, during this year, (1758,) “Hymns of Intercession for all Mankind:” with this appropriate motto: “I exhort, therefore, that, first of all, supplica-

tions, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." (1 Tim. ii. 1.) The hymns contained in this seasonable publication are forty in number. Their nature and comprehensiveness may be judged of by their titles, which are as follows:—For all Mankind. For Peace. For the Church Catholic. For the Church of England. For the Ministers of the Gospel. For His Majesty King George. For the Prince of Wales. For the King of Prussia. For the British Nation. For the Magistrates. For the Nobility. For the Parliament. For the Fleet. For the Army. For the Universities. For all that travel by Land or by Water. For all Women labouring of Child. For all Sick Persons. For Young Children. For all Prisoners and Captives. For the Fatherless Children. For Widows. For our Enemies, Persecutors, and Slanderers. For our Unconverted Relations. For the Jews. For the Turks. For the Heathen. For Arians, Socinians, Deists, Pelagians. Thy Kingdom Come!

The following hymns, inserted in the general Wesleyan Collection, are taken from this tract:—

Let God who comforts the distrest ;
 Our earth we now lament to see ;
 Father of faithful Abraham, hear ;
 Sun of unclouded righteousness !
 Lord over all, if thou hast made ;
 He comes ! He comes ! the Judge severe !
 Lo ! He comes, with clouds descending !

For the Church of England the author prays,—

Her slumbering guides and watchmen rouse,
 And on her rising ramparts place,
 Give them a voice to shake thy house,
 The rocks to break, the dead to raise,
 To bring them up from nature's grave,
 And the whole house of Israel save.

For this thou hear'st thy Spirit's groan,
 O that thou would'st thy power display,
 Divide the heavens, and come down,
 Convert our nation in a day,
 And spread our faith through earth abroad,
 And fill the universe with God.

The Bishops are referred to in the following stanzas :—

But chiefly to thy mild command
 The Masters of our Israel bow ;
 Stars let them shine in thy right hand,
 Eclipsed, alas ! and wandering now !
 Who do not yet thy kingdom see,
 But ask, “ How can the mystery be ? ”

Light of the world, thy beams impart,
 To make thy witnesses appear ;
 Thy Spirit shining in the heart
 Appoints the Gospel Minister :
 Now, Lord, the gracious wonder show,
 An Angel on thy Church bestow !

Moved by our long-continued cry,
 Some apostolic Father raise,
 Our want of labourers to supply,
 To’ admit the vessels of thy grace,
 To lay on hands, o’erruled by thine,
 And recognise the call divine.

It is highly probable that the “ apostolic Father,” who is prayed for in the concluding lines, was such a Bishop as would “ recognise the call divine,” which Mr. Charles Wesley believed the Methodist Preachers had generally received, and ordain them to the sacred office. Indeed something of this kind was necessary, if the view which is given of the Universities be correct :—

Teacher Divine, with melting eye
 Our ruin’d seats of learning see,
 Whose ruling Scribes thy truth deny,
 And persecute thy saints and thee,
 As hired by Satan to suppress
 And root up every seed of grace.

As Heretics and Lollards *still*
 Thy faithful confessors they brand,
 With all their strength and knowing skill
 Thy Spirit and his work withstand,
 In league with hell thy throne to’ o’erthrow,
 And raise the kingdom of thy foe.

Where knowledge vain, unsanctified,
 Fills every synagogue and chair,
 Where Pride and Unbelief preside,
 And wage with Heaven immortal war ;
 The Prophets’ nursing-schools are these,
 Or sinks of desperate wickedness !

True Prophets once they surely bred,
 And champions for the' incarnate God,
 Who lived thy dying love to spread,
 Who seal'd the record with their blood,—
 The truth, the way, the life of grace,
 Blasphemed by their degenerate race.

But wilt thou let the fountains fail,
 Or flow through earth with streams impure?
 Thy Gospel must at last prevail,
 Thy word from age to age endure,
 And learning, fasten'd to the Cross,
 For ever serve thy glorious cause.

During the year 1759 Mr. Charles Wesley published a fourth edition of his "Funeral Hymns," greatly enlarged. Here for the first time appeared the three exquisite compositions, which for sweetness and spirituality were never surpassed, beginning :—

How happy every child of grace ;
 And let this feeble body fail ;
 Come let us join our friends above.

But this tract is rendered especially interesting by the insertion of various hymns which were written on occasion of the deaths of several pious individuals, the writer's personal friends. Of those which relate to the Rev. John Meriton, John Hutchinson, Grace Bowen, and Thomas Walsh, mention has already been made. Others there are which commemorate the piety of Mercy Thornton, Mary Stotesbury, Westley Hall, Mr. Lampe, Ann Wigginton, Mary Naylor, the Rev. James Hervey, and other persons whose names are not given at length. In Mr. Charles Wesley's private correspondence most of these individuals are mentioned with every mark of esteem and affection.

Mary Stotesbury was the wife of Captain Edward Stotesbury, a man remarkable for his honest bluntness, and the kindness of his heart. She was a member of the society in London, and one of the most devout women of her age.

Westley Hall was the son of the apostate Clergyman of the same name, who was married to Martha Wesley. Having abandoned himself to infidelity and vice, he forsook his hapless wife and son, who were provided for by her generous and

faithful brothers. The youth died at the early age of fourteen years; but not till he had given satisfactory proofs of genuine piety. With his dying breath he commended his guilty father to the mercy of God. The following lines give an awful view of the wickedness and misery of this wretched man :—

Thou didst his heaven-born spirit draw,
 Thou didst his childlike heart inspire,
 And fill with love's profoundest awe ;
 Though now, inflamed with hellish fire,
 He dares thy favourite Son blaspheme,
 And hates the God that died for him.

Commission'd by the dying God,
 Bless'd with a powerful ministry,
 The world he pointed to thy blood,
 And turn'd whole multitudes to thee ;
 Others he saved, himself a prey
 To hell, a hopeless castaway.

Murderer of souls thou know'st he lives,
 Poor souls for whom thyself hast died,
 His dreadful punishment receives,
 And bears the marks of sullen pride ;
 And furious lusts his bosom tear,
 And the dire worm of sad despair.

Condemn'd like haggard Cain to rove,
 By Satan and himself pursued,
 Apostate from redeeming love,
 Abandon'd to the curse of God ;
 Thou hear'st the vagabond complain,
 Loud howling while he bites his chain.

But O, thou righteous God, how long
 Shall thy vindictive anger last ?
 Canst thou not yet forgive the wrong,
 Bid all his penal woes be past ?
 All power, all mercy, as thou art,
 O break his adamant heart !

Before the yawning cavern close
 Its mouth on its devoted prey,
 Thou who hast died to save thy foes,
 Thy death's omnipotence display ;
 And snatch from that eternal fire,
 And let him in thine arms expire !

The hymn on the death of Mr. Lampe, the converted infidel and theatrical musician, is very tender and beautiful. It forms a striking contrast to the writer's description of his miserable brother-in-law ; and the metre corresponds with the joyous character of the sentiments.

'Tis done ! the sovereign Will's obey'd,
The soul, by angel-guards convey'd,
Has took its seat on high ;
The brother of my choice is gone
To music sweeter than his own,
To concerts in the sky.

His spirit, mounting on the wing,
Rejoiced to hear the convoy sing,
While harping at his side :
With ease he caught their heavenly strain,
And smiled and sung in mortal pain,
He sung, and smiled, and died.

Enroll'd with that harmonious throng,
He hears the' unutterable song,
The' unutterable Name :
He *sees* the Master of the quire,
He bows, and strikes the golden lyre,
And hymns the glorious Lamb.

He hymns the glorious Lamb *alone* ;
No more constrain'd to make his moan
In this sad wilderness,
To toil for sublunary pay,
And cast his sacred strains away,
And stoop the world to please.

Redeem'd from earth, the tuneful soul,
While everlasting ages roll,
His triumph shall prolong ;
His noblest faculties exert,
And all the music of his heart
Shall warble on his tongue.

O that my mournful days were past !
O that I might o'ertake at last
My happy friend above !
With him the church-triumphant join,
And celebrate in strains divine
The majesty of Love !

Great God of love, prepare my heart,
 And tune it now to bear a part
 In heavenly melody ;
 " I'll strive to sing as loud as they
 Who sit enthroned in brighter day,"
 And nearer the Most High.

O that the promised time were come !
 O that we all were taken home,
 Our Master's joy to share !
 Draw, Lord, the living vocal stones,
 Jesus, recall thy banish'd ones,
 To chant thy praises there.

Our number and our bliss complete,
 And summon all the choir to meet
 Thy glorious throne around ;
 The whole musician-band bring in,
 And give the signal to begin,
 And let the trumpet sound !

Mr. Hervey was one of the Oxford Methodists, and was greatly indebted, while at the University, to the kindness of Mr. John Wesley, whom he acknowledged to have acted towards him the part of a father and a friend. Till a late period of his life, he cherished towards both the Wesleys sentiments of fraternal affection ; when, having received the doctrine of absolute predestination, and admitted William Cudworth to his confidence, he was induced to assume the character of a controversialist, and enter the lists against the man to whom he owed every feeling of gratitude and esteem. His strength failed him before he had completed his design ; and finding that death was at hand, he directed the manuscript to be destroyed, because it was unfinished, and because some of it was written in a character which no one but himself could decipher. His brother, however, thinking that a book which bore the name of Hervey, and was directed against John Wesley, would be a gainful speculation, placed it in the hands of Cudworth, with liberty, as he himself confessed, to " put out and *put in*" what he pleased. Cudworth, who was accustomed to speak of God's elect as having nothing whatever to do with the divine law, hated most cordially the theology which the Wesleys taught, inculcating as it did the necessity of universal holiness in order to acceptance before

the judgment-seat of Christ. He therefore undertook the welcome task allotted to him, glad to send forth into the world his own views and prejudices under the honoured name of James Hervey ; so that the “ Eleven Letters ” soon appeared. In this publication the venerable man who had been one of the best friends of the deceased, and was, beyond comparison, the most laborious, self-denying, and useful Minister of his age, was treated with insult and contumely, and represented as hardly fit for the society of infidels, much less for that of sincere Christians. The book was reprinted in Scotland ; and, bearing the sanction of Hervey’s name, and designed to cover John Wesley with odium, it was extensively read, and by many persons greatly applauded.

Mr. Charles Wesley in all probability composed his two tender and affectionate hymns on Mr. Hervey’s death immediately after that sad event had occurred, and before the injurious libel had appeared ; but still containing a reference to the peculiar opinions of which his deceased friend had latterly become the advocate. At a subsequent period, he was somewhat indelicately requested to write an epitaph on Mr. Hervey, probably to be placed upon a tablet to his memory. This service he declined, feeling the deep and unprovoked injury which was inflicted upon his brother by the interpolated and dishonest publication, which was circulated through the three kingdoms, and induced many uninformed persons to consider Mr. John Wesley as a pestilent heretic. Instead of writing the desired epitaph, he wrote the following pithy lines, which he left among his manuscripts :—

O’erreach’d, impell’d by a sly Gnostic’s art,
To stab his father, guide, and faithful friend,
Would pious Hervey act the’ accuser’s part ?
And *could* a life like his in malice end ?

No : by redeeming love the snare is broke ;
In death his rash ingratitude he blames ;
Desires and *wills* the evil to revoke,
And dooms the’ unfinish’d libel to the flames.

Who then for filthy gain betray’d his trust,
And show’d ■ kinsman’s fault in open light ?
Let *him* adorn the monumental bust,
The’ encomium fair in brass or marble write.

Or if they need a nobler trophy raise,
 As long as Theron and Aspasio live,
 Let Madan or Romaine record his praise ;
 Enough that Wesley's brother can *forgive* !

Mr. John Wesley answered, in a spirit of meekness, all that related personally to himself in the "Eleven Letters;" and Mr. Sellon, under the name of "A Country Clergyman," effectually refuted the doctrinal statements which were conceived to be unfavourable in their bearing upon practical religion; so that the effects of the book, which made a great noise at the time, were ultimately neutralized. Mr. Hervey's brother also, who had pocketed a considerable sum of money by the volume, was betrayed into some usurious and illegal pecuniary transactions, in consequence of which he lost the whole of his unrighteous gains. The just retribution of Providence in this affair was pointed out to him by the blunt honesty of Ebenezer Blackwell, with whom he kept his banking account.

While Mr. Charles Wesley was grieved at this unchristian attempt to hinder his brother's usefulness, he was also distressed, in common with others of his patriotic countrymen, on account of the perilous state of the nation. The war with France was still in progress; and through a good part of the year 1759 a dread of invasion was again generally prevalent. The French made extensive arrangements for the simultaneous invasion of England, Ireland, and Scotland; and the Romish Pretender to the British crown was said to be hovering in the rear of the enemy's forces, ready to avail himself of the enterprise, should it prove successful, to assert his claim, and expel the Protestant dynasty of Great Britain. The following letters to Mrs. Wesley were written under these circumstances:—"Mr. Madan and his mother stayed with me till near eight. We prayed fervently against the French. Their attempt is a very serious affair. Our soldiers are hastening to encamp in proper places. I verily believe God's people will either be delivered *from* the danger, or *in* it.

"You are in one of the safest places in England; but your best security is the wall of brass which surrounds you. I trust you and your little ones to the Lord, who will either turn aside the evil, or say to his disciples, 'When ye shall hear of wars, be not troubled.'"

“ June 29th. My dear Sally,—Trust in the Lord, for yourself and children. They are in safe hands. The hairs of their heads, as well as yours, are all numbered. If they live, they will live to see troublous times. Yet I do not wish them to be taken from the evil, because that evil may be softened and moderated to you through their partaking.

“ I sit waiting for the news, like old Eli; yet not trembling for the ark. *That* the Lord will take care of, I nothing doubt. All I meet with have great faith for the cause and people of God.

“ Yesterday I preached at the Foundery, with great freedom, and prayed among the bands with far greater. We did not forget you. You will soon receive the answer.

“ Our dear Mrs. Galatin, and her partner, and Mrs. Dixon, congratulate you on your son's recovery thus far. The Lord perfect his cure! and preserve his sister, and prepare us for fresh trials! How many more months shall I allow you for teaching the boy to walk? You will inform me when the measles come to Sally's turn. I trust both will be soon and safely brought through.

“ Saturday night. I got two hours this morning with Lady Huntingdon, and dined with her and Mr. Madan and Jones. All expect the French. Admiral Rodney is gone to burn their broad-bottomed vessels, or die in the attempt. He desired the King, in case he fell, to take care of his widow and family. Two hundred thousand pounds have been expended on the French boats at Havre-de-Grace and Dunkirk. Each carries three hundred men, and is so contrived as to land their men on horseback. In five hours they may reach the Sussex coast. Last Sunday night twelve of a society of ours there were seized, and carried on board the vessels that guard the coast. Their prayers may do good service.

“ My brother writes that I should give notice to all our society, to spend Wednesday, July 11th, in fasting and prayer, that God may be entreated for the land. Tell John Jones, and let him tell others.

“ On Thursday Mr. Madan and his wife set out for Clifton. He will pay you an early visit. I cannot answer for her. If she *should* favour you with her company, you will show her how she ought to behave in her own house.

“ The post is going. The Strength and Consolation of

Israel be yours ! Farewell, my dearest Sally. You fear God, and need fear nothing else."

"Moorfields, Sunday night. My dearest Sally's letter did not reach me till this morning. I was in hopes the worst was over with Charles. The hooping-cough does not always accompany the measles, and will not, I trust, in his case. The girl may not have them at all. However, expect them, and expect both the children to be brought safe out of them.

"We have good times here ; that is certain ; and the better, for the nearness of the French.

"I read part of the prayers, and preached on Psalm xxix. 10, 11 : 'The Lord sitteth upon the flood : yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever. The Lord will give strength unto his people, the Lord will bless his people with peace.' I was so full of matter, I scarcely knew what I said. The Lord owned his word. Great was our confidence in his faithful mercies, his almighty love.

"I continued instant in prayer for near half an hour after the sacrament. We wrestled for our Israel, and all the Reformed Churches. I could not help praying, in a particular manner, for the brave Admiral, who is gone to sacrifice his life, if need be, for his King and country. The whole congregation, I believe, were sensible of the divine presence : but it was not, in my apprehension, like last Sunday.

"Neither Mr. Carty nor I can guess what I ought to do, if the French were landed. It will be showed me in that day.

"My brother is alarmed by false intelligence, that we have only eleven thousand soldiers in all England. My oracle, the Colonel, reckons upon seventeen thousand. But the matter will not be determined by numbers. If the French land, and the Lord of Hosts is with us, they will make more haste back than they came with. I know not why it is, that I do not fear them more. I usually am most afraid before the danger. Perhaps the dread and the evil may now come together. However, we shall keep them off by prayer as long as we can.

"I read prayers and preached again. My subject was, 'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people.' He did administer his abundant consolations. I prayed with great earnestness for the nation : if with great faith also, we shall know by and by.

"Mrs. Galatin just now informs me, that yesterday's

express has thrown the Council into the utmost alarm and hurry. The Colonel could not learn particulars. Even the Lords of the Bedchamber are ignorant of the secret. It is supposed that news is come of the embarkation of the French. At present the wind is against them ; and if God is against them too, what signify all their designs and threatenings ?

“ I hastened in a coach to meet the society at the Foundery. We continued together, praying and pleading for our country till near eight. Had you been with us, I think your fears of the Papists would have been abated. We seemed all to be got into our strong city, whose walls and bulwarks are Salvation. Monday, at five, I encouraged them from the words above, and spent half an hour in prayer with the select band.

“ I bestowed an hour on my parting friend Madan, and commended him to the grace of God in prayer. He is happy to carry his family with him. When shall I see mine again ? I hope the storm, if it should come, will not separate us long. He informed me of that blessed soul, Lady Hotham’s, release. What particulars do you hear ? I prayed fervently for the poor disconsolate mourners ; and would write, if I thought any words of mine could comfort them.

“ It is now near five whole weeks since I saw you, and your children. Nothing could pacify me in my banishment, but the will of God confining me here. It is still more doubtful whether I shall attend the Conference. The Lord direct me and you in all things, and preserve the little ones ! ”

“ July 5th. My beloved Sally,—On Tuesday I breakfasted with Mr. Romaine and his wife, who were very loving and open. He expects to be thrust out of the churches soon.

“ Mrs. Cox and Mr. Waller joined us in the afternoon. At six I read the letters to a full audience, and dwelt mostly on our blessed Thomas Walsh. It was a time much to be remembered. I prayed with the Leaders, and pleaded for our sinful land. It was near ten before I got to rest.

“ Yesterday I breakfasted with our afflicted friend, Lady Huntingdon, and joined heartily in her sorrow for the loss of that lovely creature at Clifton, of whom the world was not worthy.

“ I rode over Westminster-bridge, and dined in the Borough, at Mr. Bignel’s. There Mr. Lloyd took me up,

and carried me to Lewisham. I looked in upon Mrs. Dewal and Mrs. Blackwell, whose inquiries after you and your family were interrupted by that gentle creature, and my particular favourite, Mr. Blackwell. He was above measure gracious ; yet I left him in ten minutes for Miss Chambers's company. He seized on my trembling companion, who hardly made his escape before night. He overtook me on the road, and set me down near my lodgings.

"I breakfasted to-day at the Foundery, not with my *Best Friend*, whom I have not yet had the happiness to see. My brother's last helps me to see a little before me. He consults me whether it would not be best to have the Conference here. I shall advise him to it. It will be the second week in August. Then I might see you the sooner, after spending some weeks at Margate. This would I do, if the Lord permit.

"You say, 'Mr. Ireland apprehends no danger ;' nor any worldly man, except our Governors. Do not you hope, nor flatter yourself, that it is a false alarm. If Providence does not interpose, Jerusalem is ruined. Take care the spirit of the world, which is the spirit of slumber, and fatal security, does not seize upon you. No power less than that which defeated the Spanish Armada, will rescue England now. You will see my thoughts (but not mine only) in a penny hymn-book I shall publish against the fast.

"You may safely direct to me at the Foundery, only not omitting *Charles*, nor mentioning my *Best Friend*.*

"Bonner's-Hall. I have been dining here, at Mr. Barnes's, with Thomas Maxfield and his wife. It is now above five weeks since I saw my dearest Sally, or her children ; and will be more than five weeks longer, if not double the time, before I must hope for that happiness again.

"How does your money hold out? as for me, I spend none, and have none to spend ; yet I want nothing but the grace of Christ Jesus. The Lord will order all things, particularly when it is best for our meeting. May you now and always find your happiness in Him !"

"London, July 7th. My dearest Friend,—Can you cast all your care on Him who careth for you and your little ones?

* The reason of this precaution was, that Mrs. John Wesley used to open the letters that were placed within her reach, to find matter of accusation against her husband, and against Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley.

If I could not trust Him with you, I should be much uneasy. An express is come, that Admiral Rodney has set fire to Havre-de-Grace, and burnt some of the broad-bottomed boats. If the news is confirmed, and not aggravated, it may retard the designed invasion. That it is designed in earnest, no man in his senses can doubt of. On Wednesday afternoon we met in the Borough some prisoners in coaches, strongly guarded. They were Frenchmen, caught ascending our coasts. I have looked for good from Admiral Rodney, ever since we were so drawn out in prayer for him. Give John Jones the enclosed against the fast-day.

“We have just heard of another embarkation of eighteen thousand French coming upon us from another quarter. But if God be for us, who can be against us? and that He is for us, is past a doubt with those that have his mind. I fear nothing so much as my own heart; yet I daily find God is greater than my heart. Let us pray the best we can, and expect the fulness of the promise.

“Saturday night. No letter from Sally concerning herself and children! You want, it seems, to try my patience. I will be even with you, and try your courage, by informing you, (but the information comes from Charles Perronet,) that the people of Canterbury are in the utmost confusion, the men all up in arms, the women all screaming, through a sudden alarm and panic, that the French are seen off Dover. It is a false alarm; that is certain: or it would have been here before any private letter. I think I must steal away to you, to be quiet; for Mr. Ireland and Dr. Middleton have *insured* you and Bristol.

“Get a friend to write when you cannot; or I shall have no rest in my spirit. The Lord bless you with his peace! Adieu!”

In this emergency of the national affairs some trusted in the valour, strength, and skill of the fleet and army, and expressed their unhallowed confidence by singing profane songs. Mr. Charles Wesley's hope was in the merciful providence of God; and his fear arose from an apprehension that the people of England might have filled up the measure of their iniquities, and rendered themselves ripe for the divine vengeance. Of the miseries of a people who are subjected to the insolence and plunder of a conquering army, he had a

deep and just impression; but in this case he was the most afraid of the loss of Protestant liberty, and of its religious advantages. The testimony of history, respecting the cruel intolerance of Popery, had not been lost upon his intelligent and susceptible mind.

To assist the devotions of the praying remnant, in this crisis, as he had done upon former occasions, he published "Hymns on the expected Invasion, 1759." At a subsequent period, Mr. John Wesley endeavoured to encourage the people of England, by referring to the revival of true religion which was everywhere manifest; saying that he could not find in all history, that a nation was ever given up to ruin, when the Spirit was poured out upon the people, and large numbers were turned to God by a true conversion. Charles dwells upon the same thought in this tract. Thus he sings:—

Drawn down by public crimes,
If vengeance must take place,
Why, Lord, in our degenerate times
Hast thou remember'd grace?
Thy kingdom why restored?
What means thy Spirit's strife,
While thousands by thy powerful word
Are pass'd from death to life?

The tokens of thy love
On every side we see,
And crowds begotten from above
Stretch out their hands to thee:
Against this evil day,
Ready prepared they stand,
To turn thy vengeful wrath away,
And save a guilty land.

In this case also prayer was prevalent, and the nation was saved. On the 20th of November the French fleet was brought to action by Admiral Hawke, and defeated, between Belleisle and Cape Quiberon. For this signal victory public thanksgivings were offered to Almighty God; and Mr. Charles Wesley's ever-fruitful mind supplied appropriate sentiments for the occasion in "Hymns to be used on the Thanksgiving-day, Nov. 29th, 1759, and after it." This publication contains fifteen hymns, including one of great length, and peculiar spirit, entitled, "The Song of Moses,

sung by Great Britain and Ireland for the Victory given them over the French Fleet, Nov. 20th, 1759.” The people in the south of England were now freed from their alarms; but the Scotch and the Irish were still in danger. God, however, interposed also in their behalf, and the impending evil was averted.

The beginning of the year 1760 found Mr. Charles Wesley in London, diligently and happily employed in his work. He was also favoured with the company and assistance of Mr. Fletcher, who had obtained ordination about a year and a half before, and was not yet presented to the vicarage of Madeley. In a letter to Mrs. Wesley, dated Moorfields, Jan. 3d, he thus speaks of himself, and of the pious foreigner, now naturalized as an English Clergyman:—“My dear Sally’s wish has been often mine, to have died in my infancy. I escaped many such thoughts last Saturday, by forgetting it was my birth-day till night, when Mr. Fletcher’s prayer put me in mind of it. Yesterday I dined alone with my faithful friend and yours, Lady Huntingdon, and passed the evening with her in close conference. This morning I breakfasted at Lady Piers’s, and dined at Mr. Lloyd’s, with Mrs. Gumley and Miss Derby. The length of the entertainment, and very trifling conversation, tired me to death. I am escaped hither, to write to my beloved partner. Next to feeling Christ present, the most desirable state is, to feel Christ absent. This we often do. O that we did it always!

“You are not too old to be cured of the rheumatism, if you have resolution to use the remedy of constant exercise. I threaten you hard, if we live over the winter, and I get a sure horse that will carry double or treble. To the Lord I commend you and yours. Adieu!

“Mr. Caslon told me he had wrote to Mr. Farley, that he could not send him the Syriac types till he informed him how many of each letter he wanted.

“I must desire you yourself to take one hundred of the Earthquake Hymns out of my study, and give them to Mr. Francis Gilbert to bring me when he returns.”

Soon after writing this letter Mr. Charles Wesley’s tender sympathies were excited, and some months of his life embittered, by a terrible calamity in the Huntingdon family,

several members of which were endeared to him by a sincere and sanctified friendship. The Earl Ferrers, the cousin of Lady Huntingdon,—a man of infidel principles, and immoral life,—perpetrated an atrocious murder upon Mr. Johnson, his own steward. He sent for the ill-fated man to attend him at Stanton, and contrived to send all his men out of the way; so that when the intended victim arrived, there were no persons in the house but himself and three female servants. When Mr. Johnson entered the room, the Earl locked the door; then ordered him to settle an account; and afterwards produced a paper, purporting to be a confession of the steward's villany, and required him to sign it. Mr. Johnson refused; and the Earl, drawing a pistol out of his pocket, ordered him to kneel down, which the terrified man did upon one knee. His Lordship called out, so loud as to be heard by one of the women at the kitchen-door, "Down on your other knee! Declare that you have acted against Lord Ferrers. Your time is come; and you must die!" He then fired; and the ball entered Mr. Johnson's body, just under the last rib. He rose up and expressed, both by his looks and broken sentences, the sensations of a dying man. The infatuated criminal continued to insult and torment the sufferer for several hours, after he was placed under the care of a Physician. The shot was fired in the afternoon, and Mr. Johnson died the next morning, the murderer rejoicing in what he had done. The ennobled felon was lodged in the gaol of Leicester, and thence removed to the Tower in London, where he remained two months before he was tried by the House of Peers.

The first mention of this melancholy case in the correspondence of Mr. Charles Wesley is in the following letter, addressed to him by the Hon. and Rev. Walter Shirley, the brother of the Earl, and a Clergyman in Ireland:—

"Loughrea, Feb. 23d, 1760. Rev. and dear Sir,—Blessed be the great God, who hath enriched your heart with love, and filled your mind with divine wisdom; and blessings upon blessings on thy head, thou sweet messenger of comfort, for thou hast refreshed my bowels, and caused me to rejoice even in tribulation.

"O my worthy friend, how infinitely am I obliged to you for the tender attention you paid to the deep affliction of my

sister, and your earnest endeavours (which I behold as if I had been present) of turning all to the advantage of her precious soul. O may those falling tears that trickle down into her bosom, be as the dew of heaven, to dissolve all that is stony about her heart, and sweetly prepare it for the more durable impressions of God's grace !

“ What shall I say of my unhappy brother? what of my poor mother? what of the innumerable evils in array before me? In the strength of the Lord I am about to oppose myself to this mountain of griefs, seeing plainly that it is God's will I should go to England. Committing myself to the care and disposal of my ever-gracious God, I purpose to set out on this melancholy journey next week, and wish above all things that I may either meet with you or your dear brother on my arrival in London. My excellent friend Lady Huntingdon has wrote to me very affectionately on this occasion. May God reward her sweet loving soul !

“ I find this wretched man has refused to see any of his relations and friends. I am determined, however, I will not be easily repulsed. I will carry him, spite of himself, I will yet carry him, the message of everlasting peace, if now at length he may be brought to accept of it. As to his life, I doubt it is past hope ; but if the Lord will hear me, and grant to my earnest petitions the saving of his poor soul, I think I should not in the least repine, whatever should be determined concerning his fate. I know, my dear Sir, you at least will not leave me to pray alone. O let us raise an army of blessed saints, that we may besiege the throne of grace, and be mightily prevailing with importunate wrestlings ! Surely, surely we shall not be cast out. I have his encouraging words yet sounding in my ears, ‘ As yet have ye asked *nothing*. Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.’ O what a mighty something have I to ask ! but the Lord says, our joy shall be full : ‘ ask, and ye shall receive.’ Lord, I believe ; Lord, I ask in faith : for thy name's sake, grant me the request of my lips. O turn the heart of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Grant me but this ; and then, whether unto life or death, dispose of him as thou seest good. I think I perceive in myself, even now, a token for good. If I may not expect the happiness of seeing you in London, at least, for God's sake, let me hear from you ; and

direct to me at the Honourable Mrs. Shirley's, in the Half-moon-street, Piccadilly.

"I am, with the greatest truth, my dear Mr. Wesley's most sincere friend, and affectionate brother in the Lord."

Never did any transgressor of the laws of God and man betray more determined obduracy than this Right Honourable murderer. Every means that Christian zeal and compassion could suggest was tried to bring him to an acknowledgment of his crime, and induce him to pray for mercy in the name of the Lord Jesus ; but all in vain. He was deaf to every warning, exhortation, and entreaty. His broken-hearted brother, Lady Huntingdon, and others, all endeavoured to effect his conversion, but without success. Prayer was also made for him in the closet, the family, and in public religious assemblies, particularly on the Lord's day, and special meetings of intercession were held in his behalf, during the period which elapsed between the commission of the dreadful act and his execution ; yet he died without giving any indication of the slightest regret for what he had done, much less that he desired the pardoning mercy of God through the sacrifice of Christ.

No man showed a more tender and generous concern for this wretched culprit than Mr. Charles Wesley ; and the Methodists in London generally followed his example. This will best appear by a few selections from his letters to his wife, who was in Bristol. He seldom wrote to her without making some reference to this unhappy man ; for the salvation of whose soul he mourned and wept, as for the salvation of a brother. In addition to his son Charles, it will be observed, he mentions his daughter Sarah. She was now an infant at the breast. His fervent piety is very apparent in this part of his correspondence.

"March 15th. Mr. Berridge is almost as old as me, but deeply exercised and highly favoured ; yet he dares not say he is justified. I am willing to receive light from whatever instrument ; neither does it show our doctrine false, but only unguarded. We did not always divide the word rightly. We laid more stress upon the verbal than the real testimony, and often set believers down for unbelievers, and the contrary. God has remarkably owned the word since Mr. Fletcher and I changed our manner of preaching it. Great

is our confidence towards the mourners, who are comforted on every side.

“You ‘*believed* His love to you.’ And why should you not believe it still? Since that time He has given you ten thousand fresh proofs of it. ‘I have appeared unto thee of old,’ He saith. ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee.’ Those drawings, if you follow them, will lead you into the holiest. You have met with unskilful guides. You needed never to let go your comforts. You might have held them fast till you embraced the promises in all their fulness. Now therefore *return to your first love*. Believe, Jesus Christ loved you, and will love you to the end. In calm confidence expect the pardon sealed; and when it is so well with you, remember me.

“I am assured, beyond all doubt, that if I hold out to the end, I shall present you as my crown in that day. Therefore did our Lord join us upon earth, that we may continue one with and in Him through all eternity.”

“Moorfields, March 17th. My dearest Friend,—I had scarcely got to my lodgings, when I was sent for to the Foundery. There I found sorrowful Lady Huntingdon and Miss Shirley just come from their hardened kinsman in the Tower. His brother from Ireland has been with him; but fears there will be no remorse till he is condemned to die; unless the prayers of God’s faithful people reach his heart. On Friday therefore we shall keep a fast for this very end. Give Mr. Gilbert notice to join us. We propose to allow perhaps half an hour longer after the morning preaching, to meet again at nine, and at the usual hour of intercession. Let us agree, touching this thing, to ask God, in the name of Jesus, to give this most desperate wretch repentance unto life.

“We spent from three to five in prayer and conference. Then I endeavoured to strengthen the weak hands, by saying to them of a fearful heart, ‘Be strong; fear not; God will come and save you.’ Never did my Master assist me more. It was near half-hour past six before I had delivered my message. Poor Miss Shirley was lifted up out of the deep, and I humbly hope very many beside.

“I walked to Spitalfields chapel, still under my burden; but there it left me after I had delivered my own soul by warning the people in strong faith and love. I read the

‘Reasons’ against leaving the Church, enforcing each ; then my hymns ; and then prayed ‘after God.’ Great confidence I felt that they will be none otherwise minded than myself : that they are determined to live and die in their calling. I told them, my brother and I had agreed that I should warn them after this manner, and reprint his ‘Reasons’ for each of our children’s preservation. Several seconded my word, especially old honest, hearty Mr. Watkins.*

“Monday night. I called on our dear sick friend, Lady Piers, almost fainting under her burden of pain ; left her relieved by prayer ; and found my beloved brother Shirley and his sister at Paddington. We mourned and rejoiced together from two till five. The door of prayer was wide open. Surely that murderer will be given to us. Help together by your prayers, private and public.

“I trust your next will bring good news of my little Sally, as well as her brother, after whom here is great inquiry. I commend you all three to the constant protection of Almighty Love. Farewell !”

“Park-street, April 5th. My beloved partner should have been with us yesterday : the grand day of atonement ! My morning subject was, ‘Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world !’ He was evidently set forth as crucified, both in the word and sacrament. Mr. Shirley offered to assist me ; but I thought it best to spare him. Mr. Maxfield’s help was sufficient.

“From half-hour past one, to half-hour past two, I improved the time in conversing with Mr. Shirley and his sister. Then many met us in the chapel, to join in prayer for the murderer. Till four we continued looking upon Him whom we had pierced. I never remember a more solemn season.

“I carried my two friends to Mrs. Hermitage’s, where Mr. Fletcher helped us to pray for poor Barabbas, as he calls him. Again the Spirit made intercession for him with groans unutterable.

“From seven till half-hour past ten our watch-night lasted. My text was, ‘Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ? behold, and see if there is any sorrow like unto my

* This was in all probability one of the two men that persuaded Mr. Wesley to rent the Foundry as a place of worship, and advanced the sum of money which was requisite to put it into repair.

sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me.' The word was sent, I believe, to many hearts. Mr. Fletcher seconded it. We both prayed 'after God,' particularly for the criminal. The chapel was excessively crowded, and therefore very hot. Miss Shirley carried me to my lodgings. It was past eleven before John Fletcher and I got to rest.

"This morning I bestowed an hour on Miss Boys. John Fletcher picked me up at the Colonel's. We passed two blessed hours with our lately-sick friend. From her we walked to Miss Shirley's at Mary-bone. She carried us to a sick woman, who used to hear Mr. Whitefield. I found her dying without Christ, and preached pure Gospel to the poor. She believes He will come and save her; therefore she cannot die unsaved. We prayed again at Miss Shirley's.

"As I shall probably take much more public care upon me, than I have ever done heretofore, my office will require me to spend more time in town; PERHAPS TO SETTLE HERE. But this we shall never do, unless it is manifested to us, that this is the will of God concerning us. The extraordinary expense would not deter me; for I can trust God to make that up.

"Miss Boys gave me half-a-guinea to-day for the 'Reasons;' and Miss Shirley a guinea for my hymn-book. Many would gladly purchase my stay here. Our friends at Bristol are not like-minded, excepting Mr. Durbin *only*.

"Jermyn-street, Saturday night. I dined with Mrs. Galatin alone; prayed and sung with the family; drank tea with my hostess; began a hymn for my dearest friends, as follows:—

God be mercifully near,
Object of my father's fear;
Me into thy favour take,
Me preserve for Jesu's sake.

With thy kind protection blest,
Calm I lay me down to rest,
All I have to thee resign,
Lodge them in the arms divine.

Her, my dearest earthly friend,
To thy guardian love commend;
Day and night her Keeper be,
Knit her simple heart to thee.

Make the little ones thy care,
 Bear them, on thy bosom bear,
 Mark'd with the good Shepherd's sign,
 Keep my lambs for ever thine.

"I may send you the rest in my next. It is time to bid you good night. Mr. Fletcher, just come, begs me not to forget minding you of him. He is a great comfort and help to me. My love to John Jones. Send me a long letter by him. The Lord be your Lord and God for ever!"

"Seven-Dials, April 11th. My dearest of Creatures,—Yesterday evening I buried my brother Ellison.* Sister Macdonald, whom he was always very fond of, prayed by him in his last moments. He told her he was not afraid to die, and believed God, for Christ's sake, had forgiven him. I felt a most solemn awe overwhelming me while I committed his body to the earth. He is gone to increase my father's joy in paradise; who often said, every one of his children would be saved, for God had given them all to his prayer. God grant I may not be the single exception!"

"I rode to Lady Piers's. Mr. Fletcher met me there. We found her wonderfully recovered. Such a cure is next to a resurrection from the dead.

"I preached at the chapel, 'Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever.' Many, I doubt not, experienced Him to be such. I met the Leaders, and our Lord in the midst. We concluded our prayers with intercession for the murderer.

"Christopher's-alley, Saturday evening. John Downes met Mr. Fletcher and me at Paddington with my Lady, just going out to Lord Ferrers's mother. She informed us, she saw several signs of relenting in him; but would not have it mentioned till we saw the end. His brother, poor man, attends him to his trial. We joined in prayer with her, and for her, &c., after she left us.

"If Mr. Jones does not return before the trial, I know not what we shall do. Several witnesses, I hear, are to be examined about his Lordship's lunacy, which may protract the trial some days. I am condemned to go through it, and fear I shall have little time for writing.

* He was the brother-in-law of Mr. John and Charles Wesley, having married their sister Susanna.

“You must not mistake my tenderness for indifference. The greatest earthly blessing I could obtain were a sight of you and your children ; but I should buy it too dear, if you came unwillingly. Therefore do as you find best in your own heart. Come with Charley, or without him, or not at all. Your will I shall receive as the will of Providence.

“I think of you at all times, and in all places, especially when it is well with us. A few days will show whether I have any business at Norwich. Continue to pray for me, and I will pray my best for you. Farewell.”

“Jermyn-street, April 17th. Yesterday morning I walked at six to Mr. I'anson's, with my friend Fletcher. My heart was overwhelmed with sorrow. Not in my own will did I enter the place of judgment. George Whitefield, his wife, and a truly good woman, one Mrs. Beckman, sat next to us. We waited till half-hour past eleven before the Lords came. They entered with the utmost state, first the Barons, then the Lords, Bishops, Earls, Dukes, and Lord High Steward. The solemnity began with reading his Commission ; after which he took his place, one step beneath the throne. Most of the royal family, the Peeresses, and chief gentry of the kingdom, and the foreign Ambassadors present, made it one of the most august assemblies in Europe. The pomp was quite lost upon me.

“Next, I think, were read the bills from the country, and indictment against Lord Ferrers, who was summoned to the bar. He was brought in by the Deputy-Governor of the Tower, preceded by the axe. He knelt down at the bar, till the Lord High Steward bade him rise. His indictment was read ; to which he pleaded, ‘Not guilty.’ Then the King's Counsel, the Attorney-General, opened the charge against him, which was a repetition of the indictment, and the proofs thereof, with little, if any, exaggeration. The witnesses were called to prove it : the three maids, who deposed they heard the pistol go off, and saw Mr. Johnson on his knee, and then upon the bed wounded, &c. His daughter's testimony was much fuller ; and the Surgeon's proved the murder premeditated, with the most horrid circumstances of aggravated malice and cruelty. A collier, who seized my Lord, concluded. Their testimonies perfectly agreed. The Judge asked the prisoner, after each deposition, whether he would

ask the witness any questions. He asked two or three, which I thought trivial.

“At first he seemed undaunted; but as the proofs came up stronger and fuller, he lost his courage, and sunk visibly down into the lowest dejection. By a quarter before three the King’s Counsel finished their proof; and I believe there was not a single person in the Court but believed the prisoner guilty. The particulars are too long to send you; and you will see them at large in the trial when it is printed.

“My Lord High Steward then called upon him to make his defence. He appeared in the utmost confusion, and said he was not prepared; must advise with his Counsel; and begged longer time. Some of the Lords, particularly Lord Mansfield, (that is, the famous Murray,) and Lord Hardwick, desired he might explain a little the nature of his intended defence, that they might know whether it was reasonable to give him longer time. He could not satisfy them; said, the circumstances he was in made him incapable; and the indisposition of his mind, or family complaint, disqualified him. He was understood to mean his lunacy; although he could hardly speak through fear and perturbation. Lord Ravensworth, his only friend, except Lord Talbot, spoke in his behalf. Others replied, till they cried, ‘Adjourn.’ Then the Lords withdrew for above an hour, and, returning, required him to proceed directly to his defence.

“He had often declared, that he would much rather die than allow himself to be out of his senses; but ‘skin for skin, all that a man hath will he give for his life.’ His pride was come down so far as to call witnesses of his lunacy. The two first deposed in general only, without being able to name any particular facts or words in proof of his being disordered. When the King’s Counsel came to cross-examine them, they were so baffled and confounded, that they contradicted themselves, recanted every shadow of proof they had brought, and proved the prisoner in his senses beyond all doubt.

“It was now seven o’clock, and the Lords adjourned again. We waited some time, and then departed ourselves. I was never so weary in my life. My companion was in the same condition. Yet God remarkably answered my prayer in the morning, and kept off the gout; so that I have not been so free from that pain any one day since I came to London.

Soon after eight we were glad to go to bed, after prayer for the poor, unhappy criminal.

“ This morning we were in the hall again by six. We expected the Lords till near twelve. They came, and heard more witnesses of the lunacy till near three. Poor Lord Ferrers was compelled to question them himself, and even his own brothers. Mr. Shirley, the Clergyman, spake most for his service : and the King’s Counsel could not invalidate any thing he said. But, alas ! neither his nor Dr. Munro’s testimony came up to the point, or proved any real fact of madness.

“ The prisoner concluded his defence with a paper read by the Clerk, wherein he said all for himself that could be said. Then the Solicitor-General recapitulated all, answered the prisoner’s witnesses, and demonstrated his guilt and wilful murder.

“ The Court adjourned, and in half an hour returned, all but the Bishops, who are never present in condemning. The Lord High Keeper asked the Lords whether he should recapitulate the whole again, as usual, or whether they would go immediately to give their vote. They all agreed to the latter. Then he solemnly asked them, one by one, beginning at the youngest Baron, ‘ My Lord, such a one,—suppose William Earl of Dartmouth,—what says your Lordship ? Is Lawrence Earl Ferrers guilty, or not guilty, of the felony and murder laid to his charge ? ’ The Lord, laying his hand on his breast, answered, ‘ Guilty, upon my honour.’

“ I counted one hundred and six, who gave this answer ; among them Lord Talbot, the prisoner’s friend, and Lord Westmoreland, his father-in-law ; and, last of all, the Lord High Steward himself. Then the poor criminal was sent for, and kneeling at the bar heard from the Judge the unanimous judgment of all his peers, that he was guilty of felony and murder.

“ My heart and that of most others bled for him. We expected the Judge would immediately pass sentence, when he called, ‘ Adjourn ; ’ probably to give the criminal a few more hours of life.

“ Soon after five we left the Court, for Mr. I’anson’s, and walked thence to our lodgings, nothing near so weary as yesterday ; as you may judge by the length of this letter.

To-morrow I suppose we shall hear the sentence pronounced, which will soon after be executed.

“ Perhaps I shall borrow this letter of you for a while. The Lord bless you and your little ones. Farewell in Christ ! ”

Sentence of death was, of course, passed upon this miserable man, and righteously executed on the 5th of May following. But even the certain and immediate prospect of dying failed to make any salutary impression upon his heart, rendered callous by infidel speculation. Mr. Charles Wesley composed three hymns of supplication for him ; continued his importunate addresses to the throne of grace in his behalf, in union with his friends by whom he was surrounded ; and, in writing to one of the Preachers in a distant part of the country, he shows the depth of his compassionate feeling by saying, “ Help together in your prayers for ■ poor murderer, Lord Ferrers ! ”

The Earl deprecated hanging, as the death of ordinary felons, and requested to die by decapitation, as more befitting a nobleman ; but this was denied. He outraged the public feeling by choosing to be conveyed to the place of execution, not in a mourning coach, but in his own landau, drawn by six horses, and he himself clad in his splendid wedding-dress. He was impatient of all religious conversation ; confessed his belief that there is ■ God ; but made no acknowledgment either of divine revelation, or of a Mediator. On surveying the apparatus of death he gave a slight motion of dissatisfaction ; kneeled down while the Lord’s prayer was repeated ; and with great energy uttered the ejaculation, “ O God, forgive me all my errors ! pardon all my sins ! ” He turned pale when the rope was put round his neck, but quickly recovered himself ; and in five minutes after he was turned off life was extinct. Many a penitent convict, trusting in Christ as his Saviour, had Mr. Charles Wesley comforted when doomed to suffer the extreme penalty of the law ; but there is no comfort in infidelity, with all its pride and affectation of philosophy. It is as alien from good taste, as from happiness and sound reason.

While the case of Earl Ferrers was still pending, Mr. Charles Wesley’s anxieties were again strongly excited on the subject of Methodism and its relation to the Church. Many

of the Preachers he found had obtained licences under the Act of Toleration; that law having been framed for the relief of Protestant Dissenters: and this he considered a virtual renunciation of their connexion with the Church of England. In several cases, however, the licensing of the Preachers, as well as of the places where they officiated, was rather a matter of necessity than of choice; no other law affording them protection, either in conducting public worship, or in preaching the Gospel of the grace of God to the neglected populace, and the spirit of persecution being extensively rampant. Mr. John Wesley, like his brother, in the first instance, opposed the Preachers in obtaining licences under the Toleration Act; but at length directed them, in cases of necessity, to put themselves under the protection of this statute.

But the most alarming occurrence at this time was, that three of the Preachers, stationed at Norwich, overcome by the importunity of some members of the society, had begun to administer the sacrament of baptism, and of the Lord's supper. They did this without consulting either of the Wesleys. The offenders were Paul Greenwood, John Murlin, and Thomas Mitchell: men whose regularity, up to this period, had been most exemplary; so that they possessed the entire confidence of their fathers in the Gospel. They had been solemnly "separated to the Gospel of God," from all worldly business, with fasting and prayer, and that by men who were in the ministry before them; having first given satisfactory proof, by piety, gifts, and success, that they were divinely called to the work; and they doubtless thought that, with these essentials of ordination, they were justified in administering the sacraments; yet still it was distinctly understood, on their admission into this ministry, that they should, in common with their brethren in general, confine themselves to preaching the word, and the maintenance of discipline in the societies, leaving the administration of the sacraments to those who had received episcopal ordination.

This renewed attempt to render the Methodists independent of the established Church filled Mr. Charles Wesley with consternation little less than that which was excited in him by the crime of Earl Ferrers; yet not greater than the amazement and terror which seized him when he first heard of the preaching of laymen in the Methodist societies:

although he had long been more than reconciled to this innovation, contrary as it was to canonical order. John Murlin came up to London, being, in all probability, summoned thither by Mr. Charles Wesley, and appears to have given considerable satisfaction by his spirit and explanations. He was deemed “sincere;” and Paul Greenwood was also directed forthwith to proceed to the metropolis, to answer for his conduct. What was thought of him, under the scrutiny and expostulations to which he was subjected, does not appear. Mr. Charles Wesley thought that the Preachers and societies generally would follow the example which had been set by their brethren in Norwich; so that unless a firm stand was now made, a wide separation from the Church was inevitable. He therefore addressed a strong letter to his brother, and to several of the senior Preachers, declaring the importance of the case, and requesting their prompt co-operation with himself to avert the threatening calamity. The following is his letter to his brother. It is without date; but was most probably written early in March, when John had just left London, and was pursuing his ministry in Staffordshire.

“Dear Brother,—We are come to the Rubicon. Shall we pass, or shall we not? In the fear of God, (which we both have,) and in the name of Jesus Christ, let us ask, ‘Lord, what wouldest *thou* have us to do?’

“The case stands thus. Three Preachers, whom we thought we could have depended upon, have taken upon them to administer the sacrament, without any ordination, and without acquainting us (or even yourself) of it beforehand. Why may not all the other Preachers do the same, if each is judge of his own right to do it? And every one *is* left to act as he pleases, if we take no notice of them that have so despised their brethren.

“That the rest will soon follow their example I believe; because, 1. They think they may do it with impunity. 2. Because a large majority imagine they have a right, as Preachers, to administer the sacraments. So long ago as the Conference at Leeds, I took down their names. 3. Because they have betrayed an impatience to separate. The Preachers in Cornwall, and others, wondered it had not been mentioned at our last Conference. Jacob Rowell’s honesty I commend. Christopher Hopper, Joseph Cownley, John Hampson, and

several more, are ripe for a separation. Even Mr. Crisp says he would give the sacrament if you bade him. The young Preachers, you know, are raw, unprincipled men, and entirely at the mercy of the old. You could persuade them to any thing; and not you only, Charles Perronet could do the same, or any of the Preachers that have left us, or any of the three at Norwich.

“Upon the whole, I am fully persuaded, almost all our Preachers are corrupted already. More and more will give the sacrament, and set up for themselves, even before we die; and all, except the few that get orders, will turn Dissenters before or after our death.

“You must wink very hard not to see all this. You have connived at it too, too long. But I now call upon you to consider with me what is to be done; first, to prevent a separation; secondly, to save the few uncorrupted Preachers; thirdly, to make the best of those that are corrupted.”

The following letters, addressed by Mr. Charles Wesley to different Preachers, display his characteristic fear, uprightness, generosity, and love of the established Church. They also place his warmth and impetuosity in striking contrast to the calm, practical wisdom of his brother. Charles would at once resort to decisive measures, perhaps so as to dissolve the society at Norwich, which was known to be very intractable, and to silence the offending Preachers. John would moderate and gradually check irregularities which he could not at once remove, but with the certainty of much evil. Charles would have all the Preachers who were not Churchmen separated from their brethren, and settled, if they chose, as Dissenting Ministers, and the rest ordained as Clergymen; not thinking that by these measures the societies would be broken up, and the itinerancy destroyed. John would rather employ both classes of Preachers in extending the work of God as widely as possible; deeming nothing upon earth so important as turning men from sin to holiness. The want of a due provision for the aged and disabled Preachers is here distinctly seen: and this was another reason why so many of their brethren had already abandoned their travelling ministry. In reading these letters, as well as that to Mr. John Wesley, it must be remembered that the writer was a poet;

and that he was not addressing the public. He does not, therefore, measure his terms, but uses the strong language to which he was professionally addicted. When he speaks of the Methodist Preachers, for instance, as being “corrupted,” he intends no reflection either upon their doctrinal sentiments, or upon their moral conduct, but simply that they were alienated in affection from the established Church; although in many instances he knew that their alienation did not arise from the principles of systematic Dissent, but from the lives and preaching of the Clergy. Their “corruption” was the desire, which they sometimes expressed, that the societies and congregations generally might have the spiritual advantages which their brethren in London and Bristol enjoyed, under Mr. Charles Wesley’s own administration,—the Lord’s supper in their own chapels, and divine service there on the forenoon of the Sabbath-day.

TO MR. NICHOLAS GILBERT.

“London, March 6th, 1760. You have heard of Paul Greenwood, John Murlin, and Thomas Mitchell’s presuming to give the sacrament at Norwich. I am the more afflicted thereat, because I had as great a love for, and confidence in, them as in any of our sons in the Gospel. They never acquainted their fellow-labourers, no, not even my brother, of their design. They did it without any ordination, either by Bishops or Elders; upon the sole authority of a sixpenny licence: nay, all had not that. Do you think they acted right? If the other Preachers follow their example, not only separation, but general confusion, must follow.

“I shall tell you my mind plainly, because I love you. My soul abhors the thought of separating from the Church of England. You and all the Preachers know, if my brother should ever leave it, I should leave him, or rather he me. While ye have any grace remaining, ye can never desire to part us, whom God hath joined. You would rather wave your right, if you had it, (which I absolutely deny,) of ordaining yourselves Priests, than occasion so great evil.

“Indeed you must become at last either Church Ministers or Dissenting. Such as addict themselves thereto, God will make a way for their regular ordination in the Church. With these I desire to live and die. If you are of the num-

ber, I look upon you as my brother, my son, and owe you all I can do for you, as to soul, body, and estate. I never proposed a friendship, and proved false to my profession. I never (that I know) forgot a kindness done me. Your fidelity to the Church of England, although your duty, I shall accept as the greatest kindness you can possibly show me, beyond any personal benefit whatsoever.

“Now consider, and speak your mind. Will you take me for your father, brother, friend? or will you not?”

TO JOHN JOHNSON.

“March 7th. I suppose you have heard, or will soon hear, of three of our steadiest Preachers having taken upon them to give the sacrament at Norwich. They gave no previous notice to their brethren, no, not even to my brother. They had no ordination, either by Bishops or Elders, and no authority but that of a sixpenny licence. Can you think this right? I need not ask you; or what will be the consequence, if the other Preachers follow their example. It has been said that our Preachers may baptize and administer the Lord’s supper, without separating from the Church of England. But are not these two inseparable? A man may shut his own eyes, and fancy no one else can see. But by so deceiving myself, can I deceive others? If my brother and I connive any longer, not only a separation, but general confusion, must very shortly ensue, and the work of God be destroyed.

“I own things are come to a crisis. Every Preacher must consider now (and ought to have considered it long ago) what will become of him. My brother and I have almost finished our course. After our departure, ye *must* become either Dissenting or Church Ministers. To which have *you* addicted yourself? If to the meeting, let us part friends. I wish you good luck in the name of the Lord. Some good you may still do, if less, far less, than before. If your conscience suffers you to accept of orders in the Church of England, I nothing doubt your admission. God has the hearts of all men in his power, and can, when his time is come, command the porter to open the door to you, as well as to Thomas Maxfield, John Haughton, Thomas Richards, Walter Sellon, and others. If your impatience cannot trust God, or tarry

his leisure, but you will break from your brethren, and set up, each for himself, then will every man's sword be set against his brother, and the flock be torn into a hundred pieces or sects.

“ But I am persuaded better things concerning many, and you in particular. You and they know, if my brother left the Church, I should leave him: and this alone would be sufficient to hold you back, that you would not part whom God hath joined. If you dare venture with us, and believe God has yet a favour for our desolate Church, and is even now visiting and redeeming us; if, I say, you can discern the signs of the times, and your heart is as my heart; then give me your hand, and let us both give up our lives to the service of God and his Church.

“ ‘ They shall prosper who love her.’ If you love her, you are nearer and dearer to me than all my natural relations. I look upon you as more than my brother, friend, or son. I acknowledge myself your willing servant, your affectionate father, your eternal debtor. All I can do for you, as to soul, body, and estate, I ought and will do, the Lord being my helper; and neither life nor death shall separate you from

“ Your affectionate friend,

“ C. W.”

TO JOHN NELSON.

“ London, March 27th, 1760. My dear Brother,—I think you are no weathercock. What think you then of licensing yourself as a Protestant Dissenter, and baptizing and administering the Lord's supper, and all the while calling yourself a Church-of-England man? Is this honest? consistent? just? Yet this is the practice of several of our sons in the Gospel, even of some whom I most loved, and most depended upon. Who would have thought that Paul Greenwood could be carried away by such dissimulation? He and John Murlin, and Thomas Mitchell, and now, I suppose, Isaac Brown, give the sacrament at Norwich. My brother suffers them. Will not all the rest follow their example? and will not separation, yea, and general separation, ensue? and must not the work of God, so far as we are concerned, be thereby destroyed?

“ John, I love thee from my heart: yet rather than see

thee a Dissenting Minister, I wish to see thee smiling in thy coffin.

“What can be done to save our Preachers? Let all things be done in love, and meekness, and the spirit of prayer.”

TO CHRISTOPHER HOPPER.

“London, March 27th, 1760. My dear Brother,—You justly observe, it is not my way to hear one side only; neither, you might add, to answer your reasons by stopping your mouth.

“You talk reason in your last, reason which cannot be answered: at least, I flatter myself so, because you speak my very heart.

“You have not been suffered to speak; your complaints have been slighted; your reasons not attended to; your old worn-out brethren left—to the parish.

“What must be your end? This question ought to be asked, considered, urged, insisted on, till it be answered to your full satisfaction.

“Here is a poor Methodist Preacher, who has given up his business (his little all) for the sake of preaching the Gospel. Perhaps he has got a wife, and children, and nothing to keep them. By labouring like a horse, and travelling like a post-boy, for ten or a dozen years, his strength is exhausted; yet he is able, and quite willing, to do what he can still. But how shall he get bread for his family? That Mr. Superintendent will look to.

“Well; be it so. Suppose neither he nor his children are starved while my brother and I live, what must he do when we depart? Our end cannot now be far off. What will then become of this old, faithful Preacher? ‘He must turn Dissenting or Church Minister.’ I grant it. There is no medium.

“‘But will you’ (you ask us) ‘now use all your interest to get him ordained?’ I answer for myself, Yes; and will begin to-morrow; or never blame him for turning Dissenter. Neither have I the least doubt but the porter will be commanded to open the door, and to admit, by imposition of hands, as many as have addicted themselves to God’s service in the established Church. I have more reason for believing this than is commonly known; and am assured, if our Preachers

do not ruin themselves and the work by their own precipitation, our Lord will take care of every one of them. If any of you prefer the service of the Dissenters, I would let you depart in peace. If your heart is as my heart, and you dare venture in the same bottom, then am I your faithful servant for the residue of my days, and bound to do all I can for you, as to soul, body, and estate.

“ I find I have you in my heart, to live and die with you : but my first care is the worn-out Preachers ; to gather them, and help them to spend their dregs of life as usefully and comfortably as possible.

“ The only word in your letter I object to is, ‘ The full discharge of all their calling.’ ‘ Let a man be proved first, and then let him exercise the office of a Deacon,’ (which was to baptize,) and of a Presbyter, which was to administer the other sacrament. Ye have been tried : ye are therefore fit persons to receive a commission to seal the covenants. But ye have not a right to do this, without any ordination at all, Episcopal or Presbyterian. No church in Christendom allows its members to take upon them this office, merely upon their own judgment. What confusion would follow, if they might !

“ What think you then of our brethren at Norwich ? They did not acquaint even my brother beforehand. Or suppose he has since known it, and connived ; what is that to me, and the other Preachers ? Ought they to have taken such a bold step, for which we are all accountable, and not have first consulted us, and proposed it at the Conference ? Is not administering the sacraments formally separating from the Church ? and have they not laid me, for one, under a necessity of either owning or disowning them ? at least, their proceedings ? God grant their rashness may not prove fatal to themselves. I feel nothing in my heart towards them but sorrow and love ; and shall do my utmost to save them from the consequences of their imprudence.

“ You may write to me as fully and freely as you please. If you know your friends, you will. I only want you to be as holy yourself, as may be, and as useful to others. I shall very soon rest from my labours, and leave you hard toiling on a stormy sea, to make the port. The Lord Jesus bring you safe after me to heaven ! ”

Mr. Charles Wesley did not satisfy himself with writing only to his brother, and the more experienced of the Preachers. He also addressed the following letter to his friend Mr. Grimshaw, of Haworth, soliciting his advice and aid. This letter contains the same facts as the others ; with an important addition. It explicitly declares Mr. John Wesley's unwillingness to interfere, for the present : so that he did not view the matter in that very serious light in which it appeared to his more anxious brother Charles ; whose uprightness and sincerity are, however, strikingly manifest.

TO THE REV. MR. GRIMSHAW.

“ London, March 27th, 1760. My dear Brother,—I write while able. The gout threatens my hand : therefore I make haste to summon you to the help of the Lord against the mighty.

“ Is there not a cause for reprinting the enclosed ? Our preaching-houses are mostly licensed, and so are proper meeting-houses. Our Preachers are mostly licensed, and so are Dissenting Ministers. They took out their licences as Protestant Dissenters. Three of our steadiest Preachers give the sacrament at Norwich, with no other ordination or authority than a sixpenny licence. My brother approves of it. All the rest will most probably follow their example. What then must be the consequence ? Not only separation, but general confusion, and the destruction of the work, so far as it depends on the Methodists.

“ I publish the enclosed, with my brother's concurrence. He persuades himself, that none of the other Preachers will do like those at Norwich ; that they may all license themselves, and give the sacraments, yet continue true members of the Church of England ; that no confusion or inconvenience will follow from these things ; that we should let them do as they please till the Conference : where I suppose it must be put to the vote, whether they have not a right to administer the sacraments ; and they themselves shall be the judges.

“ I cannot get leave of my conscience, to do nothing in the mean time towards guarding our children against the approaching evil. They shall not be trepanned into a meeting-house, if I with God's help can hinder it. Every man ought to

choose for himself; and every man shall see with his own eyes, and know what he does before he does it.

“I am convinced things are come to a crisis. We must now resolve either to separate from the Church, or to continue in it the rest of our days.

“If pride and the enemy did not precipitate them, our Preachers would infallibly find the door into the outward ministry opened to them soon. Such as addict themselves to the service of the Dissenters, we should let depart in peace. Such as dare trust God, and venture themselves in the same bottom with us, we should cherish them as sons, and do our utmost for them, as to soul, body, and estate.

“But this I insist upon: Every Preacher must know his own mind, and his brethren’s; must be able to answer, ‘What will become of me after our fathers are gone? Must not I become either a Dissenting or Church Minister? Which would I choose?’

“To have them and things as they are, is to betray our charge; to undermine the Church; and, as far as in us lies, to destroy the work of God.

“I have read the ‘Reasons’ to the society here; and their hearts are as the heart of one man. Will you not join hand and heart with us, in confirming the souls of the disciples? I anticipate your answer; for I know you pray for the peace of our Jerusalem; and you prosper because you love her.

“Direct to me at the Foundery; and strengthen my hands by your counsel, and by your prayers, if you count me worthy to be called

“Your affectionate and faithful brother.”

To this letter Mr. Grimshaw wrote an immediate answer, which he sent by the hand of Thomas Colbeck, one of the Methodist Local Preachers, who was coming up to London. The answer, which is written with great frankness, and before time had been allowed duly to weigh every subject to which it refers, contains some interesting particulars relative to Mr. Grimshaw’s clerical irregularity, and the ecclesiastical censures with which he had been threatened. It expresses merely the feelings which arose in his mind when he first read the communication of his friend. He did not, in fact, withdraw from the Methodists, as, under the momentary

excitement of the occasion, he declared it to be his purpose to do.

“Haworth, March 31st, 1760. My very dear Sir,—Having an opportunity of sending you a letter by dear brother Colbeck, who sets out for London to-morrow, I was just sitting down to write to you, when yours, as if divine Providence had some special design in it, came to hand. I write but seldom indeed, because I have seldom much to write to you about. But now, upon my word, you have furnished me with matter to write upon. The Preachers and preaching-houses are mostly licensed, you say. The evil that will follow upon this may perhaps be worse than anything that you or your brother could have any cause to apprehend from William Darney. All I desired was only a year’s probation for him, and then, as his behaviour should deserve, to be accepted by us or rejected.* Whatever John Nelson (for him I suppose you meant) wrote to you, I am very well assured that the people in Birstal Circuit were much blessed under his preaching.

“However, waving that affair, this of licensing the Preachers and preaching-houses, is a matter that I never expected to have seen or heard of among the Methodists. If I had, I dare say I had never entered into connexion with them. I am in connexion, and desire to continue so: but how can I do it consistently with my relation to the Church of England? For as it is with you, so it is with us. Since the last Conference, (what encouragement was then given the Preachers to license themselves, God and you best know,) many of the Preachers in these parts have got licensed at the Quarter Sessions. Several of the preaching-houses and other houses are got licensed. To be sure, the Methodists are no longer members of the Church of England. They are as real a body of Dissenters from her as the Presbyterians, Baptists, Quakers, or any body of Independents. How have I complained of this all the last winter to our brethren! Mr. Colbeck can tell you.

* Darney was a favourite with Mr. Grimshaw, but disowned by Mr. Charles Wesley and most of the Preachers. There is more point in this allusion than at first appears. Mr. Charles Wesley was very fastidious as to the Preachers whom he would employ in the itinerancy; and Darney was one of the men whom he discountenanced, so that even Mr. Grimshaw could not obtain for him what he thought a fair trial.

“ I speak of my situation. Can I justify, before my provincial or a consistorial Court, my preaching in a meeting-house, or my connexion with a body of Dissenting Ministers? Am I not liable to suspension *ab officio*, as well as *beneficio*? About twelve years ago, when Archbishop Hutton was Archbishop of York, amongst other arguments to stop me from preaching abroad, he made this one,—That I had preached in a licensed meeting-house (meaning the Boggard-house at Leeds). And if his Grace could have proved it, (as he upon inquiry into that thing could not,) it is not improbable that he had suspended me. I promised his Grace, at that time, that I never would (though determined to preach abroad) preach in a licensed house; no, nor even in that at Leeds, if it should appear to be licensed. And not many months ago, it being reported that I was to preach at a fixed time in a licensed building, the Minister and Churchwardens of the parish had determined to present me; but it fell out providentially that I preached in a barn near to it; and so no more was said of it. I have indeed preached now and then in a licensed house where I was a stranger, or thought no notice would be taken of it. But at the rate we go on, all the nation must be alarmed at our present proceedings: and no doubt the Spiritual Courts will shortly animadvert upon our doings, and perhaps other powers too, so soon as the war ceases. At present they have something else to do.

“ I little thought that your brother approved or connived at the Preachers’ doings at Norwich. If it be so, ‘to your tents, O Israel!’ It is time for me to shift for myself: to disown all connexion with the Methodists: to stay at home, and take care of my parish; or to preach abroad in such places as are unlicensed, and to such people as are in connexion with us. I have no intention to preach the less; but to exert myself, as far as I am able, for the salvation of sinners. I hereby therefore assure you, that I disclaim all further and future connexion with the Methodists. I will quietly recede, without noise or tumult. No one, mindful to continue with them, shall be either directly or indirectly hindered by me. I have other reasons, Sir, for leaving the Methodists, besides the above, which I shall not mention now.

“ In general, as to the licensing of Preachers and places, I

know no expedient to prevent it. The thing is gone too far. It is become inveterate. It has been gradually growing to this ever since erecting preaching-houses was first encouraged in the land : and if you can stem the torrent, by dint of persuasion, or some other influence you may have over some of the Preachers, it will be only during your own lives. So soon as you are dead, all the Preachers will then do as many have already done : and even while you live, the licensed Preachers, though they continue with you, will do worse than after your death. For now, even upon their sixpenny licence, they will dare to administer the sacraments ; whereas then they will qualify themselves farther for it by obtaining Presbyterian ordination. Dissenters the Methodists will all shortly be : it cannot, I am fully satisfied, be prevented.

“ Nor is this spirit merely in the Preachers. It is in the people also. There are so many inconveniences attend the people, that in most places they all plead strenuously for a settled ministry. They cannot, they say, in conscience, receive the sacraments as administered in our Church. They cannot attend preaching at eight, twelve, and four o’clock, on Lord’s days, and go to church. They reason these things with the Preachers, and urge them upon ordination and residence. They can object little against it, how little soever their minds are inclined to it. Therefore they license. For my part, though I do not approve of everything in our Liturgy, yet I see nothing so materially amiss in it, or our Church constitution, as to disturb my conscience to that degree, as to justify my separation from her. No ; where shall I go to mend myself ? I believe the Church of England to be the soundest, purest, and most apostolical, well-constituted national Christian Church in the world. Therefore I can, in good conscience, (as I am determined, God willing, to do,) live and die in her. But my conscience is not another man’s. I believe the Methodists (Preachers and members) have so much to say for their separation from our Church, as will not easily, in a Conference or otherwise, be obviated.

“ The doctrine of perfection runs very high, just now, in these parts. About Otley and Leeds, I am told, not fewer than thirty profess sinless perfection ; and thirty more, I expect, will pretend thereto shortly. If it be of God, it is

well. Time will prove it. I wish they knew their own hearts. My perfection is, to see my own imperfection; my comfort, to feel that I have the world, flesh, and devil to overthrow through the Spirit and merits of my dear Saviour; and my desire and hope is, to love God with all my heart, mind, soul, and strength, to the last gasp of my life. This is my perfection. I know no other, expecting to lay down my life and my sword together. May the God of all grace and peace be with you and yours. Pray for me, and I will pray for you. I am

“ Your sincere and affectionate brother.

“ P.S. I will circulate, you may depend upon it, as many as I can of the ‘Reasons against Separation.’ Send me a hundred of them.”

Mr. Grimshaw lived about three years after writing this letter; and during this period he retained his connexion with the Methodist societies and Preachers, to their mutual benefit; preaching among them, and superintending their affairs, with unabated zeal and faithfulness. He distinctly saw that the Methodists could not be permanently kept in strict union with the Church. Indeed this must have been obvious from the beginning. The employment of unordained Preachers, itinerant and local, and the formation of societies independent of the Clergy in whose parishes they lived, was in itself a partial separation. Mr. Grimshaw confesses that he could not induce the people who were impressed by his ministry, and united together in religious societies, to attend the Lord’s supper at their several parish churches. The same state of things, it will be recollected, existed four years before, when Mr. Charles Wesley visited that part of the country. The reason of this feeling Mr. Grimshaw does not state. Nor was it necessary. His own practice suggested the reason. He did not confine his ministrations to Haworth; but travelled through a wide district of country, preaching in the open air, in barns, chapels, and private houses, to crowds of people who were under the care of his clerical brethren. Why did he this? Because he knew that not a few of his brethren neither preached nor lived according to their holy vocation; so that the objects of their charge were perishing for lack of knowledge. For this reason the people absented themselves from their own churches, and

sighed for a stated ministry which they and their families could regularly attend on the Lord's day, at convenient hours, to their "edification and comfort." Mr. Charles Wesley, Mr. Grimshaw, and others who entertained their views, resisted these claims with all their might; but they could not extinguish the desire from which the claims proceeded. They wept, they argued, they expostulated, they entreated, they distributed with both hands "Reasons against Separation;" but they were unconsciously disputing against the very feeling and taste which their own preaching had produced, and which must remain as long as their preaching retained its spiritual, energetic, and converting character.

When these excellent men contended that the Methodist Preachers must either be Clergymen or Dissenting Ministers, they were not aware of the design of Providence to raise up in the nation a middle party, not directly identified with either, but exerting a salutary influence upon both. In those times, indeed, no human sagacity could foresee how the Methodist succession could be secured. God, however, has taken care for this. The Wesleyan Methodists have never, as a body, either avowed or entertained the belief, that an ecclesiastical establishment, Episcopacy, or the use of a liturgy, is unlawful. In the strict sense of the word, therefore, they are not Dissenters. Separatists from the established Church most of them unquestionably are; and occupy an independent position between the two great bodies, with one of which Mr. Charles Wesley thought they must necessarily be identified. Yet even a regular attendance upon the religious services of the Church, by all who choose it, is not at all inconsistent with membership in the Methodist societies; nor is it even discountenanced.

The view which Mr. Charles Wesley and Mr. Grimshaw took of what they call "licences" was partial, and unworthy of their superior sense. They themselves were Clergymen, and their gowns generally secured them respect, and protected them from violence. Not so with the less honourable lay-Preachers. They had no means of protection from mobs and ill-minded individuals, in the discharge of their ministry, but such as the law of toleration provided; and to enjoy the benefits of that law, they must take the prescribed oaths, and receive the requisite certificate: that is, they must be

licensed. And it was only by a similar process, with respect to the houses where they preached, that they and their hearers could be secured from the operation of persecuting statutes, enacted in a former age. It was hard to condemn men for placing themselves under the protection of law. If the law and those who administered it would regard the Methodist Preachers and congregations as Dissenters, those defenceless persons, who had no other means of protection, were not to blame. They had no reason to believe that the Legislature would alter the law to suit their convenience. Without licences both the Preachers and their hearers would have been at the mercy of every ruffian in the land, and many of them must have been ruined by imprisonment and heavy fines. That the Preachers generally claimed a right to administer the sacraments on the authority of their licences, for which it appears each of them paid "sixpence," is very unlikely. They were not fools. Their licences were obtained as means of security against bad men, and unjust laws. Their authority to administer the sacraments was derived from their alleged divine call to the pastoral work, connected with their official and recognised "separation to the Gospel of God ;" which they appear to have regarded as their ordination, although not performed by the imposition of hands. The expediency of such administration, under their peculiar circumstances, was another question.

It is somewhat pleasant to read Mr. Charles Wesley's statement, that all the Methodists in London, to a man, were agreed in sentiment with him, and were resolved to live and die in the Church of England. The fact is, they had every thing that the Methodists in the country desired: divine service in Church-hours, and the Lord's supper in their own chapels. They had even more. These London favourites were almost continually indulged with the presence of one or other of the Wesleys, teaching them early and late from the pulpit, baptizing their children, and dispensing to them every Sabbath-day the sacred memorials of redeeming mercy.

"Deep in rich pastures, will thy flocks complain?"

A Yorkshire Methodist might have addressed these metropolitan Church-folks, who seldom went near a church except at

a wedding or a funeral, as Job did his healthy and loquacious friends : “ I also could speak as ye do : if your soul were in my soul’s stead, I could heap up words against you, and shake mine head at you.”

The project of Mr. Charles Wesley to procure episcopal ordination for Mr. Hopper and the other Preachers, appeared to him a matter of immense importance ; but it savours more of the anxious Churchman, than of the zealous Methodist, whose own movements had been notoriously irregular. His object in this was twofold. It was to prevent separation from the Church, and to secure a provision for the Preachers in the time of old age. But the scheme was impracticable. It was not likely that any Bishop would ordain the whole of these simple-hearted and laborious men, who had never breathed the air of a college, and whose habits were alien from canonical order : and if any Bishop were to ordain them, it would only be on condition that each of them should confine his ministrations within the limits of a parish. In this case, there would have been an end of that itinerant preaching which was everywhere so greatly sanctioned by the divine blessing ; and most of the Methodist societies must have been dissolved. Painful as were the privations of the Preachers, especially in the time of age and infirmity, few of them, had the proposal been made, could have been induced to accept a comfortable maintenance upon these terms. They chose rather to endure the severities of hunger, if such were the will of God, than abandon the people of their charge, and leave the uninstructed multitudes of their countrymen to perish for lack of knowledge. The fact is, Mr. Charles Wesley was a poet and a Preacher ; but he had not, as he himself confessed, the practical wisdom which was requisite to superintend and conduct an extensive work of God, like that with which he was connected. Happily for the Methodists and the world, the Preachers had entire confidence in the judgment of his brother, who kept them steadily engaged in the work of saving souls. In the exercise of a noble faith they persevered in their original calling ; they sought not the clerical office for a morsel of bread ; and God in his providence took care of their temporal interests.

At this time Joseph Cownley, having been compelled by affliction to desist from the more laborious duties of the itine-

rancy, had become resident at Newcastle, where he preached as he was able, with great acceptance and usefulness, to the end of his life. Hearing of the irregularity which had taken place at Norwich, and knowing Mr. Charles Wesley's deep anxiety respecting the state of the Methodists generally, he availed himself of the opportunity of writing to him on these subjects. He complains of the want of all suitable provision for the Preachers who, like himself, were disabled by age or disease; and with his usual good sense adverts to Charles's favourite project of getting the Preachers episcopally ordained. "There are several of my brethren," says he, "who might make the like complaint with me, who have not fled either to the gown or cloak for succour, and who, I would persuade myself, have no thoughts of doing it, unless they could do it, and be Methodist Preachers still." "I can easily believe that many, if not most, of those who shall survive you, and from right principles continue in the work, will separate from the Church, except, as my friend Hopper says, you get them fastened where they are by prevailing on one or more of the Bishops to ordain them. Could this be done, it is highly probable that Methodism might continue as it is till death should remove them also; for they would be able, notwithstanding all the opposition of false brethren, to keep the bulk of the people where they are. But then what Bishop, either in England or Ireland, will ever do this? will ordain a Methodist Preacher, to be a Methodist Preacher? For my part, as poor and worthless a wretch as I am, I could not submit to it on the terms on which most of my brethren have hitherto got it. What happened at Norwich we had not so much as heard of till Mr. Hopper received yours. We have since heard what was done, and who were the doers of it.

"Give me leave now to press you to do what I think is your bounden duty: I mean, to visit the north this summer. We have excused you to the poor people, who long earnestly to see you, till we can do it no longer. If you refuse to come now, we can say neither more nor less about it, (if you are neither sick nor lame,) than that you cannot, because you will not. If you could not preach at all, it would do them good only to see your face. If it should suit Mrs. Wesley to come with you, I have a tolerable house, prettily situated, that should be at your service, as long as you pleased; and

we would make it as agreeable to you as we possibly could."

In his letter to Mr. Grimshaw, it will be observed, Mr. Charles Wesley says that his brother approved of the administration of the sacraments by the Preachers at Norwich. Be this as it may, there is no reason to believe that he immediately interposed to put an end to it. In his notice of the ensuing Conference, which was held in the month of August following, he says not one word on the subject; but appears to have been exceedingly happy with his Preachers, and to have been perfectly free from all those gloomy apprehensions concerning them which possessed the mind of his brother and of their mutual friend at Haworth. He says, in his Journal, "I spent two days with the Preachers, who had been waiting for me all the week: and their love and unanimity was such as soon made me forget all my labour."

Charles, however, would not allow the matter to rest. His alarm for the Church was deep and incessant. After a lapse, therefore, of somewhat more than twelve months, his brother, in a letter addressed to him, says, "Our Conference ended, as it began, in peace and love. All found it a blessed time:

*Excepto, quod non simul esses, cetera læti.**

"I do not at all think, to tell you a secret, that the work will ever be destroyed, Church or no Church. What has been done to prevent the Methodists leaving the Church, you will see in the Minutes of the Conference. I told you before, with regard to Norwich, *dixi*. I have done at the last Conference all I can or dare do. Allow me liberty of conscience, as I allow you."

The Preacher who had taken the lead in administering the sacraments at Norwich died about seven years afterwards, and was characterized by Mr. John Wesley as "honest Paul Greenwood." He adds, "He could ill be spared; but he was ready for the Bridegroom; so it was fit he should go to Him."

In the year 1761 Mr. Charles Wesley was in a very unsatisfactory state of health. He was laid aside from the public duties of his ministry, and retired to Bath, for the benefit of

* "In all respects we were very joyful while together. Your absence was the sole abatement of the general happiness."

its waters. Here his ever-active mind, as usual, was employed in the composition of sacred hymns, which he subsequently published to the spiritual profit of many. While he was in this situation he received the following kind letter from the Vicar of Shoreham :—

“ April 29th. My very dear Brother,—Upon inquiring after your health, the last week, in London, I received the disagreeable account of your being ill at Bath. It would be a great pleasure to hear that God had given success to those waters, and that your health was in a fair way of being restored. This must certainly be the prayer of all your friends, especially of those who have the advancement of Christ’s kingdom sincerely at heart. Your Lord has made you not only a very laborious, but a very successful, labourer in his vineyard : and therefore may it be his blessed will thus to continue his faithful servant for years to come !

“ However, I doubt not but his divine grace has long since taught your heart to say, ‘ Not my will, but thine be done.’ He certainly knows best when that work is finished which He has given you to do.

“ It has pleased the divine goodness to exercise me, for some months past, with sore afflictions in my family. This is the fifth time, within forty years, that my dear wife has laboured under deep distress of soul, mind, and body. But I trust, through the prayers of her friends, (amongst which I hope for yours,) she will once more be delivered. My son Jacky was given over several times since last Christmas, in a violent complicated fever ; but, through the blessing of God on the great care and skill of Dr. Turner, he is restored again.

“ May the Lord Jesus ever be with all of us, both in life and in death ! I am, with sincere respects, both to yourself and your very dear spouse, my dear brother,

“ Yours most affectionately.”

CHAPTER XXII.

IN the year 1762 Mr. Charles Wesley favoured the Christian church with two additional volumes of sacred poetry. They were entitled, “Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures.” Most of them are concise, but some are of considerable length. They are two thousand and thirty in number, and are founded upon particular texts, beginning with Genesis, and ending with the Revelation of St. John. Many of them are inserted in the general Wesleyan Collection; not a few display a singular ingenuity; and nearly all breathe the same spirit of pure and fervent devotion which so strikingly marks his former compositions. They prove the author to have been a diligent, accurate, and critical student of the sacred books, and often throw an interesting light upon important passages. The metres present an agreeable variety; and, with a few exceptions, the entire work is perhaps one of the best uninspired manuals for the Christian closet that was ever published in the English language.

The volumes are introduced by the following laconic and pointed preface:—“God having graciously laid his hand upon my body, and disabled me for the principal work of the ministry, has thereby given me an unexpected occasion of writing the following hymns. Many of the thoughts are borrowed from Mr. Henry’s Comment, Dr. Gell on the Pentateuch, and Bengelius on the New Testament.

“Several of the hymns are intended to prove, and several to guard, the doctrine of Christian perfection. I durst not publish one without the other.

“In the latter sort I use some severity; not against particular persons, but against enthusiasts and Antinomians, who, by not living up to their profession, give abundant occasion to them that seek it, to cause the truth to be evil spoken of.

“Such there have been in every age, in every revival of religion. But this does in no wise justify the men who put

darkness for light, and light for darkness; who call the wisdom of God foolishness, and all real religion enthusiasm.

“When the wheat springs up, the tares also appear; and both grow together until the harvest: yet is there an essential difference between them. This occasions a difference in my expressions, and as great a seeming contradiction, as when I declare with St. Paul, A man is justified by faith, and not by works; and with St. James, A man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

“My desire is, rightly to divide the word of truth. But who is sufficient for these things? Who can check the self-confident, without discouraging the self-diffident? I trust in God, none of the latter will take to themselves what belongs to the former only.

“Reader, if God ministers grace to thy soul through any of these hymns, offer up a prayer for the weak instrument, that, whenever I finish my course, I may depart in peace, having seen in Jesus Christ his great salvation.”

Few persons would think of going to the verbose Commentary of Matthew Henry for the elements of poetry; but the genius of Charles Wesley, like the fabled philosopher's stone, could turn everything to gold. Some of his eminently beautiful hymns, strange as it may appear, are poetic versions of Henry's expository notes. One specimen may be given. The Commentator, explaining the name of God, as it was given to Moses, and recorded in Exodus xxxiv. 6, 7, says,—

“(1.) He is *merciful*. This bespeaks his pity and tender compassion, like that of a father to his children. This is put first, because it is the first wheel in all the instances of God's good-will to fallen man, whose misery makes him an object of pity. Let us not then have either hard thoughts of God, or hard hearts towards our brethren. (2.) He is *gracious*. This bespeaks both freeness and kindness. It intimates not only that He hath a compassion to his creatures, but a complacency in them, and in doing good to them; and this of his own good-will, and not for the sake of anything in them. His mercy is grace, free grace. This teaches us to be not only pitiful, but courteous. (3.) He is *long-suffering*. This is a branch of God's goodness which sinners' badness gives occasion for. Israel's had done so. They had tried his patience, and experienced it. He is long-suffering; that is,

he is slow to anger, and delays the execution of his justice. He waits to be gracious, and lengthens out the offers of his mercy. (4.) He is *abundant in goodness and truth*. This bespeaks plentiful goodness. It abounds above our deserts, above our conception and expression. The spring of mercy is always full, and streams of mercy always flowing. There is mercy enough in God, enough for all, enough for each, enough for ever. It bespeaks promised goodness, goodness and truth put together, goodness engaged by promise, and his faithfulness pawned for the security of it. He not only does good, but by his promise He raises our expectation of it, and even obliges Himself to show mercy. (5.) He *keepeth mercy for thousands*. This denotes, [1.] Mercy extended to thousands of persons. When He gives to some, still He keeps for others, and is never exhausted. He has mercy enough for all the thousands of Israel, when they shall multiply as the sand. [2.] Mercy entailed upon thousands of generations, even those upon whom the ends of the world are come. Nay, the line of it is drawn parallel with that of eternity itself. (6.) He *forgiveth iniquity, transgression, and sin*. Pardoning mercy is specified, because in that divine grace is most magnified; and because that is it which opens the door of all other gifts of his divine grace. He forgives offences of all sorts, iniquity, transgression, and sin, multiplies his pardons, and with Him is plenteous redemption."

The valuable sentiments thus expressed in humble prose Mr. Charles Wesley embodies in elegant and energetic verse. He sings in the full exercise of faith, and of adoring gratitude; and millions of hearts and voices still unite in the same hallowed strain:—

Merciful God, thyself proclaim
 In this polluted breast;
 Mercy is thy distinguish'd name,
 Which suits a sinner best:
 Our misery doth for pity call,
 Our sin implores thy grace;
 And thou art merciful to all
 Our lost, apostate race.

Thy causeless, unexhausted love,
 Unmerited and free,
 Delights our evil to remove,
 And help our misery:

Thou waitest to be gracious still,
 Thou dost with sinners bear,
 That saved we may thy goodness feel,
 And all thy grace declare.

Thy goodness and thy truth to me,
 To every soul, abound,
 A vast, unfathomable sea,
 Where all our thoughts are drown'd :
 Its streams the whole creation reach,
 So plenteous is the store,
 Enough for all, enough for each,
 Enough for evermore.

Faithful, O Lord, thy mercies are,
 A rock that cannot move ;
 A thousand promises declare
 Thy constancy of love :
 Throughout the universe it reigns,
 Unalterably sure ;
 And while the truth of God remains,
 The goodness must endure.

Reserves of unexhausted grace
 Are treasured up in thee,
 For myriads of the fallen race,
 For all mankind, and me.
 The flowing stream continues full,
 Till time its course hath run ;
 And while eternal ages roll
 Thy mercy shall flow on.

Merciful God, long-suffering, kind,
 To me thy name is show'd ;
 But sinners most exult to find,
 Thou art a pardoning God.
 Our sins in deed, and word, and thought,
 Thou freely dost forgive ;
 For us thou by thy blood hast bought,
 And died that I might live.

Dr. Gell was a London Clergyman, who flourished during the commonwealth. He was a profound biblical scholar, and a man of great spirituality of mind ; but somewhat mystical in his views of religion. Most strenuously did he contend, in opposition to the prevalent theology of his day, that it is the privilege of the people of God to be saved from all sin during the present life. He published an "Amended Translation"

of the five books of Moses, and designed the publication of a similar work on the entire Scriptures; but his manuscript, the anxious labour of many years, was mostly consumed in the great fire of London, which occurred in the year 1666. The remainder, relating to some portions of the New Testament, was printed after his death, in two thin folio volumes. This very wise and holy man was a favourite writer with Mr. Charles Wesley, who admired both his spirit and divinity.

Bengelius is well known as a Lutheran Minister, of extraordinary piety and erudition. Many of Mr. John Wesley's notes on the New Testament are translated from the works of this celebrated Critic and Expositor. Mr. Charles Wesley had been led to a careful examination of Bengelius's writings, in consequence of the assistance which he had been called to render his brother, in preparing his translation of the New Testament, and the explanatory notes with which it is accompanied.

In Mr. Charles Wesley's "Short Hymns" two points of doctrine are introduced, in which he differs from his brother. They are spiritual darkness, and Christian perfection. He assumes that, sometimes, by an act of mere sovereignty, God withdraws from his people the light of his countenance, leaving them in the most distressing uncertainty whether or not they are the objects of his favour; that this is done as a means of their advancement in holiness; and that, in these seasons of anguish and dismay, they are not only abandoned to the fiercest temptations of the wicked one, but also to severe mental chastisements inflicted by the hand of their heavenly Father. These were views which he had received, not from the sacred volume, but from the writings of the Mystics, to which he had given implicit credence in the earlier periods of his religious course. His brother had long abandoned these peculiarities altogether, having now become "a man of one book." Charles still adhered to them, because they accorded with those morbid feelings to which he was constitutionally prone. One example may be given:—

Shall man direct the sovereign God,
Say, "He cannot use his rod
But for some fresh offence?
From saints He never hides his face,
Or suddenly their comforts slays,
To prove their innocence?"

Nay, but He casts the righteous down,
 Seems on his beloved to frown,
 Yet smiles their fears to see :
 He hears the oft-repeated cry,
 “ Why, O my God, my Father, why
 Hast thou forsaken me ? ”

Then let the patient, perfect man
 His integrity maintain,
 But not before his God :
 The Lord may crush a sinless saint,
 As once he left his Son to faint
 And die beneath his load.

The sentiment contained in the concluding lines of this hymn is one to which Mr. Charles Wesley often refers in his poetry, and upon which he was accustomed to lay great stress. The Lord Jesus was crucified by wicked hands, and treated with the bitterest hatred and scorn. He was also “ forsaken ” by his Father ; it “ pleased the Lord to bruise Him,” and to “ put Him to grief ; ” so that his “ soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death ; ” and “ his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground.” In various passages of the New Testament believers are described as having “ fellowship ” with Him in “ his sufferings,” and being “ conformable unto his death.” These and other texts of a similar kind, it is presumed, denote two things : First, that the persons here referred to have become dead to sin through the sacrifice of Christ. They are no longer under condemnation on account of it ; and it has no dominion over them. In this sense they are mystically “ crucified with Christ,” and “ dead with ” Him. Secondly, such passages also denote the liability of believers to suffer persecution, even in its severest forms, for Christ’s sake : and when they endure reproach, insult, contumely, wrong, and violence, even to martyrdom, on account of the “ righteousness ” which He has enjoined, and which they practise for the honour of his name, they have “ fellowship ” with Him in his sufferings ; for they are, in their degree, treated as He was, and for the same cause. Those who thus “ suffer with Him ” shall “ reign ” and “ be glorified with Him.”

But the assumption, that the children of God are ever “ forsaken ” by Him, as Christ was in the garden and upon the cross, and that He in the same manner “ bruises ” them,

and “puts them to grief,” is conceived to be more than doubtful. The Lord Jesus was thus “delivered up,” not as matter of discipline, or of personal trial, but for the expiation of the world’s guilt; for “his soul” was made “an offering for sin.” In this work He “trode the wine-press alone.” No one can have any proper “fellowship” with Him in the redemption of the lost souls of men. There is no atoning efficacy in the sufferings of all the saints upon earth, either for themselves or for others. Good men may be brought into “heaviness through manifold temptations,” arising from Satanic influence, sickness, want, bereavement, and a thousand other evils; but that they need ever lose the joyous witness of God’s adopting love, of their filial relation to Him, and their hope of heaven, is at variance with the general tenor of the apostolic writings, which call upon them to “rejoice evermore,” and to “rejoice in the Lord always.” Such admonitions would be absurd, and compliance with them impossible, if, without any spiritual declension, or sin committed on their part, they are treated as was the Lord Jesus when He died as the substitute of sinful men.

Such were the views of Mr. John Wesley. Spiritual darkness he attributes to various causes. “But I dare not rank among these,” says he, “the bare, arbitrary, sovereign will of God. He ‘rejoiceth in the prosperity of his servants.’ ‘He delighteth not to afflict or grieve the children of men.’ His invariable will is our sanctification, attended with ‘peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ These are his own free gifts; and we are assured, the ‘gifts’ of God ‘are,’ on his part, ‘without repentance.’ He never repenteth of what He hath given, or desires to withdraw them from us. Therefore he never *deserts* us, as some speak. It is we only that *desert* Him.” *

“‘But is not darkness much more profitable for the soul than light? Is not the work of God in the heart more swiftly and effectually carried on during a state of inward suffering? Is not a believer more swiftly and thoroughly purified by sorrow, than by joy? by anguish, and pain, and distress, and spiritual martyrdoms, than by continual peace?’ So the Mystics teach; so it is written in their books; but not in the oracles of God. The Scripture nowhere says, that

* Works, vol. vi., p. 80.

the absence of God best perfects his work in the heart. Rather, his presence, and a clear communion with the Father and the Son. A strong consciousness of this will do more in an hour, than his absence in an age. Joy in the Holy Ghost will far more effectually purify the soul, than the want of that joy; and the peace of God is the best means of refining the soul from the dross of earthly affections. Away then with the idle conceit, that the kingdom of God is divided against itself: that the peace of God, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are obstructive of righteousness; and that we are saved, not by faith, but by unbelief; not by hope, but by despair!"*

The time at which Mr. Charles Wesley published his "Short Hymns" was an important period in the history of Methodism. For many years he and his brother had preached with signal success in various parts of Great Britain and Ireland, and multitudes of people through their labours were turned to God; yet he had often observed to John, that their Pentecost was not come. Richer measures of divine influence he believed were still in reserve, and would ere long be shed upon them, and upon the people among whom they laboured, producing effects still more marked and glorious. That long-anticipated time seemed now to have arrived. An unusual degree of divine power attended the preaching of the word, in almost every place; so that "believers were added to the Lord, multitudes, both of men and women," beyond all former example. While converts were greatly multiplied, the lukewarm were quickened; backsliders were reclaimed; and not a few of those who had for years adorned their religious profession entered into a higher state of holiness and spiritual enjoyment than they had heretofore experienced. They believed, in fact, that they had received that "perfect love" which "casteth out fear," and which the Wesleys, both in their ministry and writings, had uniformly taught to be attainable in this life by all the people of God. Some hundreds of persons, of established religious character, professed to have attained to this; and their whole spirit and conduct confirmed their testimony. They were examples of holy cheerfulness, of meekness and charity, and of diligence in every duty.

But at length the tares appeared among the wheat. In

* Works, vol. vi., p. 90.

London a class of persons arose, who assumed that they were wiser than their teachers, and ran into the wildest extravagancies; so as even to take upon themselves to prophesy. They were patronized and encouraged by Thomas Maxfield, whom the Bishop of Derry had ordained, that he might assist Mr. Wesley; and, as the generous Prelate expressed himself, "that the good man might not work himself to death." Mr. John Wesley bore with these misguided persons as long as any hope of reclaiming them remained; but finding that their conduct was matter of public scandal, and that they were incorrigible, he separated the ringleaders from the society, and publicly disowned both the men and their proceedings. Maxfield himself afterwards withdrew, and caused a severe rent in the London society.

It is a characteristic of a great mind steadily to adhere to well-ascertained principles, even when they are abused by weak or bad men. Some years after Luther had revived the scriptural doctrine of justification by faith, he saw it applied to the most licentious purposes by ranting Antinomians; yet he abandoned not this truth, but maintained it with stern fidelity to the day of his death. Mr. John Wesley had derived his views of Christian perfection from a diligent, prayerful, and long-continued study of the holy Scriptures; and when he saw the doctrine perverted and abused by George Bell and his wild associates, his views concerning it remained unchanged. He still contended, on the authority of holy Scripture, that it is every man's duty to love God with all his heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and his neighbour as himself; and that provision is made in the evangelical covenant for bringing the children of God, even in the present world, to this blessed state of conformity to his will. If men were indeed required to bring themselves to this state, they might well despair of attaining to it; but with the word of the living God as the warrant of their confidence, and the almighty Spirit as their Sanctifier, they ought never to despair of coming up to this standard, so as to "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord."

Until this time it had been understood that Mr. Charles Wesley agreed with his brother on this as well as every other doctrine of Christian verity; although he had repeatedly used unguarded expressions in his hymns, which could not be justi-

fied. But now his views on this subject appear to have undergone a change, in consequence of the extravagance and pride of which he was a distressed witness. He did not from this time contend, as do many, for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin till death; but he spoke of Christian perfection as a much higher attainment than either he or his brother had previously regarded it. In his estimation, it is not to be obtained by a present act of faith in the mercy, truth, and power of God; but is rather the result of severe discipline, comprehending affliction, temptation, long-continued labour, and the persevering exercise of faith in seasons of spiritual darkness, when the heart is wrung with bitter anguish. By this painful and lingering process he believed that the death of "the old man" is effected, and a maturity is given to all the graces of the Christian character. Upon this theory no man can ever say that he has attained to this state: and hence Mr. Charles Wesley condemned "the witnesses," as he called them; that is, the persons who testified of the time and manner in which they were delivered from the root of sin, and made perfect in love; regarding them as self-deceived. In some of his "Short Hymns" he has given considerable prominence to these peculiarities of opinion. Yet in many other compositions, written under different circumstances, he speaks an opposite language. In his beautiful hymn on the death of Mrs. L——, most probably Mrs. Lefevre, he sings,—

She was, what words can never paint,
A spotless soul, a sinless saint,
In perfect love renew'd,
A mirror of the Deity,
A transcript of the One in Three,
A temple fill'd with God.

The witness of his hallowing grace
'Talk'd with her Maker face to face,
And, mark'd with his new name,
His nature visibly impress'd,
While all her even life express'd
The meekness of the Lamb.

The change in Mr. Charles Wesley's manner of speaking on the subject of Christian perfection, as might be expected, gave considerable uneasiness to his brother, who felt it to be very undesirable that they should even seem to contradict

each other in their ministry and writings. In a letter, therefore, addressed to Miss Furley, a very devout young lady, who was afterwards married to John Downes, he says, "Take care you are not hurt by anything in the 'Short Hymns,' contrary to the doctrines you have long received."

On this subject he also says, in a letter to Charles, "That perfection which I believe, I can boldly preach; because I think I see five hundred witnesses of it. Of that perfection which you preach, you think you do not see any witness at all. Why, then, you must have far more courage than me, or you could not persist in preaching it. I wonder you do not, in this article, fall in plumb with Mr. Whitefield. For do not you, as well as he, ask, 'Where are the perfect ones?' I verily believe there are none upon earth; none dwelling in the body. I cordially assent to his opinion, that there is no such perfection here as you describe: at least, I never met with an instance of it; and I doubt I never shall. Therefore I still think, to set perfection so high is effectually to renounce it."

The matter still rested with considerable weight upon his mind. At a subsequent period he therefore again addressed Charles on the same subject. "Some thoughts," says he, "occurred to my mind this morning, which I believe it may be useful to set down: the rather, because it may be a means of our understanding each other clearly: that we may agree as far as ever we can, and then let all the world know it.

"I was thinking on Christian perfection, with regard to the thing, the manner, and the time.

"1. By perfection I mean the humble, gentle, patient love of God and man, ruling all the tempers, words, and actions: the whole heart, and the whole life.

"I do not include an impossibility of falling from it, either in part or in whole. Therefore I retract several expressions in our hymns, which partly express, partly imply, such an impossibility.

"And I do not contend for the term *sinless*, though I do not object against it.

"Do we agree or differ here? If we differ, wherein?

"2. As to the manner, I believe this perfection is always wrought in the soul by faith, by a simple act of faith; consequently, in an instant.

"But I believe a gradual work, both preceding and following that instant.

“Do we agree or differ here?”

“3. As to the time, I believe this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body.

“But I believe it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before death.

“Do we agree or differ here?”

“I believe it is usually many years after justification; but that it *may be* within five years, or five months, after it. I know no conclusive argument to the contrary. Do you?”

“If it *must be* many years after justification, I would be glad to know how many. *Pretium quotus arrogat annus?* And how many days or months, or even years, can you allow to be between perfection and death? How far from justification *must it be?* and how near to death?”

“If it be possible, let you and me come to a good understanding, both for our own sakes, and for the sake of the people.”

What answer Mr. Charles Wesley returned to this candid and sensible letter, we have no means of ascertaining. Full as he was of poetic fire, being the creature of feeling, it was not his practice to analyze doctrinal principles with logical exactness. He was far more expert at beating down spiritual pride by a pithy rebuke, administered either in prose or verse.

A few months after the publication of the “Short Hymns,” he received the following letter from his faithful and affectionate friend Mr. Perronet, of Shoreham. That venerable man, it will be observed, modestly intimates that, in some of the hymns, there was an undue degree of severity towards certain professors of religion, whose errors rather proceeded from weakness of understanding, or the want of information, than any corrupt principle in the heart. Mr. Perronet, in a very feeling manner, adverts to the sufferings of his excellent wife, who for many years was greatly afflicted both in body and mind.

“Shoreham, Jan. 1st, 1763. My Reverend and dear Brother,—I thank you for the favour of your last visit, and should have been glad if it could have been repeated. I doubt not but we, however, enjoy the benefit of your prayers; and I desire we may ever enjoy them.

“The dear companion of my life is still in the fiery furnace,

from whence I doubt not but she will be delivered like gold purified in the fire ; or, as you express it in your obliging letter to my son Billy, ‘ she will be gathered as a ripe shock of corn into the heavenly garner.’

“ I have lately read over your last Hymns, with the same pleasure which your former always gave me. Does my friend inquire whether all the verses equally please ? Let Horace answer for me :—

*Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura.**

“ But I will still add another cause to what Horace mentions ; and to which he was certainly a stranger : A pious zeal for the honour of God and religion ; and a pious fear lest delusions should overspread the Methodist church. These, my dear friend, are highly laudable, and highly becoming the Christian Divine, and the Christian poet. That there are some things which want setting to rights, is most certain : but let us take care that whilst we root up the tares, we root not up the wheat at the same time ! Let us endeavour to preserve the latter, though it may be attended in a gracious heart with many of the former. Let not a pious soul deny the work of God, in itself, because it is either unusual, or in a larger abundance, than we looked for, or expected.

“ At the first dawnings of Methodism, surely there were many mistakes in many gracious souls : and how many zealots were there who condemned the whole together ! Let this teach us that prudence and moderation, that coolness and discernment, which the present outpouring of the Spirit so plainly requires from us.

“ I am so thoroughly convinced that it is a work of God, and so desirous that it may spread over the earth, but especially in my valley of dry bones, that I am quite grieved for any interruption it may meet with, either from those who give or those who may take offence.

* “ But where the beauties more in number shine,
I am not angry when a casual line
(That with some trivial faults unequal flows)
A careless hand, or human frailty, shows.”

FRANCIS.

“My dear brother will easily excuse this freedom from one who loves him, and which he uses because he loves him.

“We rejoice much at your happy recovery ; not merely for your own sake, or that of your family, but for the sake of thousands who are yet unborn. I wish your dear spouse an entire freedom from her pain ; and I wish all of you a safe and glorious journey through time to eternity. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of us ! Our love and respects are with each of you.

“Thine most affectionately.”

A few weeks after writing this truly Christian letter, the devout Vicar of Shoreham was deprived of his wife, whose life and sufferings were brought to a close. She died on the 5th of February, in the seventy-fourth year of her age. No man possessed a heart more tender and sympathetic towards the afflicted than Mr. Charles Wesley ; and his letter of condolence to his bereaved friend was very cordially received by that most excellent man, who thus acknowledges the receipt of it :—

“March 14th, 1763. My Reverend and very dear Brother, —The obliging favour of yours is come safe to hand ; for which you have my sincere thanks and acknowledgments. I never indeed wanted so much consolation, through a troublesome pilgrimage of near seventy years ; though I have been frequently in the furnace of affliction, and frequently tossed from wave to wave upon a boisterous ocean. However, my God was always my support, and constantly proportioned the strength to the day : but, like an all-wise and gracious Physician, He reserved the highest cordial for the time of deepest distress. All glory be to His holy name !

“How low did the Lord lay his poor, afflicted child ! He laid her even in the dust for two years together. Her constant moan was, her bad heart ; her want of faith, and divine love ; her want of every spark and shadow of goodness ; her want of Christ, which was the foundation of all her spiritual sufferings. But I know assuredly that her God has abundantly supplied all her wants, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus. I often told her that He certainly would. But what she could not then believe, she now perfectly knows. It is true, that the time of our separation is only as

a moment ; but even during that moment, as you justly observe, I should be very desolate without the divine presence.

“ I desire, therefore, that it may be a part of both your prayers, that I and mine may ever enjoy it. I am greatly obliged to your dear partner for her tender and Christian sympathy. May the good God fit every one of us for all events ! and may He carry us all safe to his eternal kingdom of glory, through Christ Jesus !

“ My family joins in much love and respects to yourself, and good Mrs. Wesley. I am, my very dear friend and brother,

“ Thine most affectionately.”

The death of Mrs. Perronet was quickly followed by that of the apostolic Grimshaw, who was somewhat suddenly called away in the midst of his labours and usefulness. On the 5th of March, 1763, he wrote to Mr. Charles Wesley concerning the persons in London who professed to have received the blessing of entire sanctification ; but as he had obtained his information respecting them merely from report, and erroneously supposed that they were all as foolish and extravagant as George Bell, it would be unjust both to them and him to publish his letter. His censures are based upon misapprehension. There is no reason to believe that he at all dissented from Mr. John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, correctly understood. The beginning and end of this letter afford a fine view of the writer's spirit, just about to enter into the joy of his Lord. Addressing his friend Mr. Charles Wesley, he says, “ God bless you, and yours, and brother Downes ! Who wrote last, I know not : you or I. Judge as you please. This I know, I love you dearly. The work of God prospers in these parts.” “ We have taken above an hundred of Mr. Ingham's scattered members into society, who behave well, and are very solicitous for the life and power of godliness. I hope we shall pick up many more of them. I rejoice and give God thanks that He hath so renewed your strength. May He long continue it for his own glory, his people's benefit, your own and your family's comfort ! I desire my sincere respects to your spouse, and Mr. Downes ; being

“ Your very respectful and affectionate brother.”

From this letter it is manifest that Mr. Grimshaw had reconsidered the subject of his intended withdrawal from the Methodists, as declared on a former occasion. When Mr. Ingham's people, being forsaken by their instructors, were scattered as sheep without a shepherd, he assisted in gathering them into the Methodist fold; and speaks of their union with the Methodists as matter of thankfulness and joy. Hence we learn, that he not only continued his itinerant ministry, in connexion with Mr. Wesley's Preachers, but also shared in the pastoral care of the people who were united together in Christian fellowship.

About five weeks after the date of the letter, of which an extract has just been given, Mr. Grimshaw fell asleep in Jesus. Mr. Venn, then of Huddersfield, preached a sermon on the mournful occasion, which he also published; and Mr. Thomas Colbeck, a Methodist Local Preacher who was on the spot, and a personal friend of the deceased, gave the particulars of his illness and dissolution in a letter to Mr. Charles Wesley. This interesting document, written at the time, affords additional proof, were it needed, of Mr. Grimshaw's connexion with the Methodists to the close of his useful life.

"Keighley, May 21st, 1763. Reverend and dear Sir,—I should have answered your letter sooner, but expected to have an opportunity of looking over Mr. Grimshaw's papers: and if I could have met with anything for your purpose, I intended to send you a copy: but I believe Mr. Venn desired to peruse them before he published the sermon; and they are in his hand. Before this time I suppose you have had an opportunity of seeing Mr. Venn's sermon, to which is annexed a short sketch of Mr. Grimshaw's life.

"It would be an acceptable service to thousands in these parts, to be favoured with an elegy on the mournful occasion. You cannot exceed the truth in describing the humility, uprightness, unintermitted labours, and universal love of that man of God who is now inheriting the promises.

"Our dear and much-regretted friend was divinely persuaded that, as life had not, so neither could the ghastly tyrant, separate him from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"His consolations, from almost the moment the fever

seized him, were neither few nor small. He frequently expressed himself as if he was as happy as it is possible to be while clothed with mortality, and as fully satisfied that when the silver cord of life should be loosed, an abundant entrance would be ministered to his joyous soul, into the holiest through the blood of atonement, as if he had already been an inhabitant of the heavenly Jerusalem.

“The Apothecary, and all who visited Mr. Grimshaw, were not in the least degree apprehensive of any symptoms attending his disorder, which seemed to threaten dissolution; yet he seemed to have some intimation that the Master called for him: for before he was confined to his bed, he gave directions in writing about his funeral; requesting that he might have a poor man’s burial-suit, and a poor man’s coffin; and that about twenty of his spiritual brethren, and nearest relations, might pay their last respects to what of him could die, by attending his corpse to the place of interment.

“He desired that a Methodist Preacher at least might be invited to preach upon Phil. i. 21: ‘For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain:’ a scripture which he caused to be engraved upon the candlestick, pulpit, and walls of the church, and which was exemplified in the whole of his ministerial labours, for above twenty years. He did not cease frequently, and oftener than he sat down to his own table, to distribute to famishing souls the bread of life; and truly he was an able scribe, not accustomed to deal in the false commerce of unfelt truths, but ready to bring out of the treasury of a rich experience things new and old. It was the meat and drink of Mr. Grimshaw, to labour for God; and he never appeared to be so much in his proper element as when he was about his heavenly Father’s business.”

Thus ended the life of the Rev. William Grimshaw; one of the best and most useful men of his age. For some time after he had entered upon the sacred office, he was an entire stranger to Christian piety, and was not even moral in his conduct; but having been deeply convinced of sin, and endured the anguish of a wounded conscience, he was filled with unutterable peace and joy by believing in Christ, and obtained power over the sins by which he had formerly been enslaved. His great concern was then to make known to others the salvation of which he was a happy partaker. It is

questionable whether any Clergyman ever surpassed him in laborious zeal. In addition to the duties of his own parish, he travelled in all directions, without either fee or reward, preaching Christ in the open air, and in barns, as well as from house to house; undaunted either by the severity of the weather, the badness of the roads, the rudeness of the people, or the prospect of persecution. His own church being too small, another of ample dimensions was erected on its site, which still remains as a monument of his energetic ministry. It bears the pious inscriptions of which Mr. Colbeck speaks; so that if the eye of the worshipper should happen to wander, it can scarcely move in any direction without meeting some striking text of holy writ, adapted to fix the attention upon subjects of everlasting importance.

The Wesleys and Mr. Whitefield delighted to visit this man of God, and were always welcome to his pulpit. Their occupation of it, however, was sometimes dispensed with. On these festive occasions, when "divers came from far," the church was not unfrequently filled to suffocation, and yet thousands could not gain admission. In such cases a window was taken out of the church, on the right side of the pulpit, and the itinerant ambassador of Jesus, bringing the news of divine mercy through the cross, stood in the opening, where the thousands within and without could hear words whereby they might be saved.

The most profligate of his parishioners revered Mr. Grimshaw; for they "felt how awful goodness is." While the choristers sang the psalm, between the prayers and the sermon, he occasionally retired for the purpose of visiting a public-house in the neighbourhood; and if he found any tipplers there, he drove them before him to the church like a flock of sheep, hanging down their heads like delinquents as they were. The house is still standing, with a small window towards the church, through which it is said some one was usually appointed to watch during the time of divine service on the Sabbath, that he might give the alarm to his companions when the cassocked monitor made his appearance. When they had timely warning of his coming, they are reported to have fled in all directions, with the utmost haste, that they might escape his dreaded reproofs and expostulations.

Of this holy man it may be truly said, that, from the time of his conversion, till his death, he knew nothing but Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. The delights of domestic intercourse, of learned ease, of elegant literature, and of polished society, he freely sacrificed, and lived for the one object of turning sinners to the Lord Jesus; and in the sight of crowds of happy converts, whom he saw from Sabbath to Sabbath listening with tears of grateful joy to his ministry, and pressing to the table of the Lord, he must have felt the highest gratification, forming a rich reward for his incessant toil and self-denial. His clerical brethren were offended with his irregularity, and still more with the censure which his diligence and spirituality reflected upon their guilty supineness. By his superiors in the Church he was also threatened with ecclesiastical prosecutions: but none of these things moved him; for he was happy in the approval of his own conscience, and in the success of his ministry, while the blessings of multitudes came upon him for his unwearied labours of love.

Into the niceties of theological controversy Mr. Grimshaw appears never to have entered. His views of evangelical truth were, of course, in substantial agreement with those of the Wesleyan Ministers; since he was voluntarily united with them in public labour to the end of his life. Among the descendants of his hearers at Haworth it is said, that his ministry was tinged with Calvinism after he had been visited by Mr. Whitefield; and that after one of the Wesleys had been with him, and had preached in his church, he zealously asserted God's universal love to man. The fact is, he was more intent upon the conversion of sinners, than upon the settlement of metaphysical questions arising out of the doctrines of Christianity; yet his affectionate co-operation with the Methodist Preachers affords sufficient proof that he had no fixed and serious objections to their creed.

Mr. Charles Wesley was deeply affected by the death of his friend at Haworth. He wrote two beautiful hymns on the occasion, celebrating the grace of God, as manifested in the piety, usefulness, and final triumph of this good Minister of Jesus Christ. He also preached a sermon on the close of Mr. Grimshaw's labours, most probably at West-street, where the devout people united with him in thanksgiving to God

for the glorification of his honoured servant. His own mind was greatly quickened at this time, and his preaching was attended by double power. In a letter to his wife he therefore says, "God prospers my labours as at the beginning of my course. Perhaps it is a blaze before death. I preached last night from the twenty-third psalm, to my own astonishment when the hour was past. My vehemence occasioned my bleeding at the nose for a long time. Last Wednesday night I was near two hours preaching of blessed Mr. Grimshaw. The chapel was crowded with attentive hearers. I am to preach twice to-morrow; again on Tuesday evening; a funeral sermon on Thursday," &c.

Five days after Mr. Grimshaw entered into rest, Mr. Charles Wesley was called to mingle his tears with those of Lady Huntingdon, on the death of her daughter, Lady Selina Hastings. She died in her twenty-sixth year, after an illness of sixteen days. With the mother of this youthful victim of disease, Mr. Charles Wesley had lived in habits of intimacy and Christian friendship more than twenty years, and had received from her many acts of kindness, of which it was impossible that his generous heart should ever lose the impression. The formation of Lady Selina's character he had also observed, having been a frequent visiter of the family. He could not therefore be unaffected under the sad bereavement; for the deceased was dear to her widowed mother. Writing to Mrs. Wesley on Ascension-Day, he says, with his usual faith and tenderness, "This morning Lady Selina ascended! Great reason we have to believe she died in Christ. Her mother only said, 'The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord!'"

This was a time of deep anxiety and sorrow to Mr. Charles Wesley; not on account of death's ravages merely, but the injury done to the cause of religion by misguided men. After all the disgrace which had been brought upon the Methodists in London, by the folly of George Bell and his wild associates, Thomas Maxfield succeeded in effecting an extensive division; so that where love and peace had formerly reigned, there was now confusion, tale-bearing, unkindness, harsh judging, and every evil work. From the desponding tone of feeling into which such a state of things was

likely to throw him, and to which he was constitutionally prone, the wise Vicar of Shoreham endeavoured to rouse him by the following beautiful letter. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley were both in a suffering state of health.

“Shoreham, July 6th, 1763. My Reverend and dear Brother,—Whither should a mourner in Zion fly for consolation? especially one whose very heart seems to be broken for Zion’s sake? Should he not fly to Him who has promised ‘beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness?’ There let us send him; and there let the pious mourner be comforted.

“Satan has certainly kindled a fire; but nothing except the chaff shall be consumed by it. Thy endeavours to quench it shall, at least, bring down a blessing upon thy own head, though they should succeed no further. Thy warnings, not meeting with credit, are only a part of thy cross. Take it up, my brother, and follow thy great Master!

“A sincere friend of thine has, for more than six times seven years, been talking to the dead. Would you change crosses with him? He would, if it was lawful. But God commands you both to bear your own. Thy will be done!

“It is undoubtedly a trying time for the poor Methodist church. But the Keeper of the vineyard will watch over it, notwithstanding all the craft and all the violence of the enemy. Christ will only purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; and when He has fanned away the chaff, let us hope to see much pure grain, though smothered over at present.

“Talk not of thy former uselessness, or of being reduced again to it. The Lord is only trying thee, to make thee still a more glorious instrument in his hands.

“I hope divine Providence will so order matters, that we shall have the pleasure of seeing you at Shoreham. In the mean while, may the waters, and every other prescription, be attended with a signal blessing! And if it seem meet to the divine wisdom, may we soon hear that your dear companion has recovered her health. All here join in hearty respects and good wishes to you both, and in the same to our dear brother. The Lord Jesus Christ be with us all! Amen.

“Thine most affectionately.”

This truly Christian letter was, after a few months, followed by another of the same kind, from the same intelligent and friendly Divine:—

“Shoreham, Nov. 25th. My Reverend and dear Brother,—I take the present opportunity of acknowledging the favour of yours, which is just come to hand. I sympathize with you in all your afflictions, and have still hopes that light, even great light, will soon shine out of this darkness. The church of Christ, you know, has often been brought to the lowest ebb; and then her Lord, who knows the best time, has arose to her deliverance. Fear not, my dear brother, but even against hope believe in hope; and we shall both see the salvation of God!

“I believe this world, I mean the moral part of it, appears to us exactly alike. It seems, like the ancient chaos, to be ‘without form, and void,’ and ‘darkness’ surrounds it. But a glorious time is approaching, when the Sun of Righteousness shall rise upon it with healing in his wings, and make it a more glorious paradise than ever!

“We shall see it, my dear brother; we shall certainly see it; though not with these bodily eyes: and we shall rejoice over it with the whole choir of saints.

“In the mean while, let us rejoice in submitting quietly to the divine will. Let us patiently do and suffer what our Lord has appointed for us; and He that shall come will come, and will tarry no longer than is best for us.

“We should have been glad to have seen both you and our dear sister. But perhaps the Lord has decreed, we shall not meet till we meet for ever. Thy will be done! Our love and respects are with you both. The Lord Jesus be with all of us!

“Thine most affectionately.”

The Vicar of Shoreham was not the only friend by whose correspondence Mr. Charles Wesley was encouraged at this period, tried as he was by personal and domestic affliction, and by the state of the London society, which had for more than twenty years shared largely in his labours and care. From Mr. Whitefield, then in America, he also received a letter, full of affection, zeal, and hope:—

“New-York, Dec. 26th, 1763. My dear old Friend,—Once more I write to you from this dying world. Through infinite, unmerited mercy, I am helped to preach twice or thrice a

week, and never saw people of all ranks more eager in Philadelphia and this place than now. Lasting impressions, I trust, are made. At New-Jersey College we had sweet seasons among the sons of the Prophets: and I have had the like pleasure of conversing with new-creature Ministers of various denominations. Ere long we shall join the Elders about the throne. Then shall we all greatly marvel, and try who can shout loudest, ‘He hath done all things well.’ Neither you, nor your brother, nor the highest archangel in heaven, shall, if possible, outdo even me, though less than the least of all. Continue to pray for me, as such. Remember me, in the kindest manner, to your dear yoke-fellow, and all inquiring friends; and assure yourselves of not being forgotten in the poor addresses of, my dear friend,

“Yours in Jesus.

“I hope your brother lives and prospers. How is our friend Ireland and family? God bless him and you.”

Concerning Mr. Charles Wesley’s personal history, during the years 1764 and 1765, little information is to be obtained. In the spring and summer of the first of these years he was in London, and his wife in Bristol. At that time they were both in an infirm state of health. Writing to her, under the date of May 17th, he says,—

“My dear Sally,—Is my history worth sending you? So you think; and therefore I send it. On Friday I breakfasted with the Preachers at the Foundery. They seem of one heart and mind. I carried Mr. James to dine with our happy friends, Mr. and Mrs. Moss, who would give half of their kingdom for a sight of you and your children. The afternoon we passed among the tombs. In my return I called on my beloved son Osgood, who is swiftly declining, and ripening for glory. I sympathized with him most sensibly, but wished for his spirit of humility and love.

“Yesterday my Doctor flattered without hurting me; for I did not believe one word he said; feeling the contrary every day and hour.

“Sunday, May 13th. I preached at the chapel from, ‘God sent his Son Jesus to bless you, in turning you away, every one of you, from his iniquities;’ and stayed two hours longer at the table. We dined at Mrs. Hermitage’s, where your absence spoiled our cheer. I could not throw off the

burden, having left you in so poor and low a way. May you find the God that heareth prayer a very present help in time of trouble !

“ If I may believe the brethren who came to me in the evening, the word in the morning did not return empty : but I took no comfort from it myself.

“ Monday, May 14th. I began the New Testament at the chapel, expounding, ‘ He shall save his people from their sins.’ My audience was made up of our own and Mr. Whitefield’s, and Mr. Madan’s hearers. I kept them near an hour, and rode home weary enough. Nothing but your letter could have refreshed me.

“ Tuesday, May 15th. I breakfasted near sister Boulton, who declines fast. I visited Mr. Matthews, still nearer the haven. The first warm weather will probably waft him home.

“ To hear that you are tolerably well, does me more good than anything I have met with in London. To be set free from all the tender ties of nature, you scarcely expect : and who in his senses would wish you so to be ? ‘ Without natural affection,’ is the character of a Heathen. But may not natural affection become inordinate ? You are not in danger of the defective, but of the excessive, extreme. God alone can make us happy.

‘ Who builds on less than an immortal base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.’

‘ Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace.’

“ So you defend your son for interrupting the course of justice ! Does he expect the boy’s mother will beg him off ? Give my love to him and his sister, to Mr. Ireland, Durbin, and all friends.

“ Tell me faithfully how you are, and continue. I dine to-day at brother Kemp’s, and preach at the Foundery, if enabled. Remind the Preachers to pray for me in the society. The Strength and Consolation of Israel be yours ! Adieu !”

A few weeks after this letter was written, John Downes, one of the Methodist Preachers, of whom Mr. Charles Wesley, as well as his brother, entertained a high opinion, was married to Miss Furley, in Bristol. It was proposed that the happy pair should bring little Charles Wesley with them

to London, that he might spend a few weeks with his father. He was now somewhat more than six years old; and his musical propensities and genius had already begun to excite observation. It is probable that the father's friends in London (and he had many there) were desirous of seeing him, as well for the gratification of their own curiosity, as from a feeling of respect for his estimable parent. All the parties, however, were disappointed. Hence the following letter, which the father addressed to Mrs. Wesley in July this year:—

“My dearest Sarah,—Your account of yourself damps my joy; but I trust you in good hands. As your day, He has promised your strength shall be.

“John Downes has brought his bride. I *thought* she would not be troubled with my son, nor you make the experiment whether you could live one month without him.

“I kept one of my watch-nights on Friday, and a blessed time we had. Yesterday I preached at the Seven-Dials twice. It was one of the days of the Son of man. My strength sufficed for meeting my friends in the evening, and I was very little fatigued.

“Tuesday, July 10th. Beck drank tea with us at Mr. Downes's lodgings. I am going to preach at Deptford. If you cannot keep Sally from eating poison, I must grub up all the trees in the garden, or take another house without one. Give my love to Charles. I know not what to say to Sally, unless she has quite left off eating raw fruit. Then you may give my love to her also.

“If I am in Bristol at the time of the Conference, I shall be quite private.

“Mrs. Downes advises me to take a house more in the air. I am too old for flitting. The Lord be your Strength and Peace! Adieu!”

It is probable that Mr. Charles Wesley spent the greater part of the year 1765 in Bristol; or, if he devoted as much time to London as he had long been accustomed to do, that Mrs. Wesley accompanied him there; so that their epistolary correspondence was interrupted. Early in the following year his brother addressed to him an affectionate but very stirring letter, of which an extract is subjoined. He appears to have thought that Charles was too much occupied with the

care of his family, and did not sufficiently exert his remaining strength for the advancement of the work of God.

“Dear Brother,—We must, we must, you and I at least, be all devoted to God! Then wives, and sons, and daughters, and everything else, will be real, invaluable blessings. *Eia age, rumpe moras!* * Let us this day use all the power we have! If we have enough, well; if not, let us this day expect a fresh supply. How long shall we drag on thus heavily, though God has called us to be the chief conductors of such a work? Alas, what conductors! If I am (in some sense) the head, and you the heart, of the work; may it not be said, ‘The whole head is sick, and the whole heart is faint?’ Come, in the name of God, let us arise, and shake ourselves from the dust! Let us strengthen each other’s hands in God, and that without delay. Have *senes sexagenarii* † (who would have thought that we should live to be such?) time to lose? Let you and me, and our house, serve the Lord in good earnest. May his peace rest on you and yours! Adieu!”

After the lapse of a few months, Mr. John Wesley again addressed his brother in a similar strain. He suggested that they ought more frequently to meet and correspond with each other; and he gives a striking view of the peculiar talents which each of them possessed, and of the manner in which they should be employed, especially in preaching. “I think,” says he, “you and I have abundantly too little intercourse with each other. Are we not old acquaintance? Have we not known each other for half a century? and are we not jointly engaged in such a work as probably no two other men upon earth are? Why then do we keep at such a distance? It is a mere device of Satan. But surely we ought not, at this time of day, to be ignorant of his devices. Let us therefore make the full use of the little time that remains. We, at least, should think aloud, and use to the uttermost the light and grace on each bestowed. We should help each other—

‘Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.’

* “Come, bestir yourself, and lay aside delay.”

† “Old men that have attained their sixtieth year.”

“O insist everywhere on full redemption, receivable now by faith alone! consequently to be looked for now. You are made, as it were, for this very thing. Just here you are in your element. In connexion I beat you; but in strong, short, pointed sentences, you beat me. Go on in your own way, what God has peculiarly called you to. Press the instantaneous blessings: then I shall have more time for my peculiar calling, enforcing the gradual work.”

Mr. Charles Wesley was, with his brother, deeply convinced of the necessity of entire devotedness to God. His health was still delicate; he was sensible of the decay of his strength; and he had a solemn impression that his life was hastening to a close. The subjoined extracts from letters to his wife show what manner of spirit he was of at this period, with the energy and success of his ministrations. Notwithstanding the distractions which Maxfield and his unruly companions had occasioned, the congregations in London were large, and the society, purged of the foul leaven, was in a state of sound prosperity. Both the public preaching, and the sacramental services, were numerously attended; and “the power of the Lord was present,” to wound the careless, and heal the broken in heart.

“Sunday. My dear friend will be glad to hear, we have had a feast of fat things this morning. I am just come from preaching holiness for an hour, and administering to a multitude of communicants.

“My Doctor gave me full instructions last night. Islington waters he forbids. Steel would be fatal, he says, and throw me into a dropsy. My body requires a quite different regimen from what it did last year, and with good management (if you believe him) may last these dozen years. He will hardly cheat me into a hope of many months longer: yet I may live to hear Charles talk Latin and Greek.

“It is observable, what some tell me, that on Thursday night, after my preaching poverty of spirit, such a spirit of humility fell upon the bands, at their meeting, as had not been known for months or years past. Every mouth was stopped; not one *boasting* word of perfection was heard. They lay low in the dust before the Friend of sinners, ashamed and confounded at his presence.

“One of Mr. Maxfield’s society, after hearing me, cried

out, 'This poverty of spirit will destroy all *our* perfection !' Another fairly confessed herself undeceived, and gave up her perfection, because, as she said, she had never been poor in spirit. It is surprising, the readiness of the people to receive my sayings. I do not despair of their all coming right at last."

"Jermyn-street, June 7th. Last Sunday was the Lord's day indeed. My subject at Spitalfields was, 'The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms : and He shall thrust out the enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy.' From hence I strongly preached the great salvation ; too great for my dear partner to believe ; yet she may obtain it before me, who am first convinced of it in my understanding. It should seem I spoke as the oracles of God, by the abundant testimony He gave to the word of his grace. For near an hour He opened my mouth to declare the mystery of the Gospel, so as I have seldom spoken. A thousand hearers, I believe, would have ventured their lives on the truth of my report.

"We had near twelve hundred communicants. I prayed (in faith, I hope) for the eight children appointed to death on Wednesday next. The Spirit did surely help our infirmities, and the consolations of God were not small with us. Several testify their having received the love of Christ under the late preaching. If it be so, they will show it by keeping his commandments.

"I lately blamed Mr. Venn for his long sermon ; and at the Foundery I preached one of near an hour and a half long, to above five thousand listening souls. Five or six hundred more it is supposed to hold since the alterations. My subject was, 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters.' I was much drawn out, you may suppose, by my keeping the people so long. Never was I assisted more. Give God the glory. My strength was renewed by the interval between. I felt little weariness, and slept as well as usual.

"Monday, June 5th. I spent three hours of the morning with Mr. and Mrs. Powis, whose friendship for me has already alarmed my fellow-labourers. Who can stand before envy ? It is the Minister's besetting sin. To break the force of it, I requested my friends to hide me in a corner of their hearts, and never to mention my name. They

saw the necessity of so doing. We had a blessed meeting together.

“June 6th. I rode with brother Butcher and Collison to Shoreham. By the way we breakfasted at Greenwich with brother Dornford, once a witness of *his own* perfection, but now very tame and sober-minded. A serious Dissenter and his wife joined with us in singing and prayer. Then we went on our way rejoicing. In my other letter you see my reception at Shoreham. This morning Jack Perronet accompanied me to brother Staniforth’s, in Greenwich. His wife is just ready for the Bridegroom. We met for the better here also.

“Here is a fresh demand for my ‘Short Scripture Hymns.’ ”

“My dear Sally,—My friends are of my mind, that it is a pity I should be here without my family, because none else can so well, and so naturally, care for me; although every one is ready to make my stay convenient to me. At present I look no farther than Bristol, and Michael’s-hill. Perhaps I may live to see you settled there; perhaps not. You will find a few sincere friends, after me, in Mr. James, Mrs. Vigor, Mr. Butcher, Collison, and Kemp. My work, I very well know, keeps me alive more than it wears me out. That and my life will probably end together.

“It is superfluous, yet I cannot help cautioning you about Charles, (and Sally too,) to take care he contracts no acquaintance with other boys. Children are corrupters of each other.

“Have you seen Foot’s house, and liked it? What says friend Vigor to your mounting the hill? I shall not dislike our being farther removed from the room. The Lord will order all things. My brother, I presume, will look upon you on Wednesday se’nnight, in his flight to the Land’s End. He is an astonishing youth! and may be saluted, like the eastern Monarchs, ‘O King, live for ever.’

“The Foundery, August 19th. Yesterday I passed at Ham, with our dear Colonel [Galatin], his partner, and Miss Bradshaw. He seems swiftly declining, and ripening for glory. God may rebuke the nightly fever, and restore his strength. If he and we live to another year, we shall most probably see and receive him in Michael’s-hill.

“I visited Mrs. Whitefield, a little better. She expresses great love to you and me. George preaches himself to death. Blessing and love to the children. Farewell in Christ !”

“My dear Sally,—What news of Sammy’s invisible tormentors? All flesh is grass, you see in him. When his teeth break out, he may recover his strength and looks, and be the finest child in Bristol, till more teeth pull him down.

“Last night my brother came. This morning we spent two blessed hours with George Whitefield. The threefold cord, we trust, will never more be broken. On Tuesday next my brother is to preach in Lady Huntingdon’s chapel at Bath. That and all her chapels (not to say, as I might, herself also) are now put into the hands of us three.

“My brother and sister will call on you, I presume, on Wednesday. She continues quite placid and tame. You can be courteous, without trusting her.

“Let Mr. James know how long my stay here will be, and desire him to write, when he has any intelligence to communicate. He is too prudent to show any forwardness for the house; and too friendly to lose time about it; especially as it will encourage the subscribers here, to hear a house is actually secured. I should have his list of subscribers, if any are added, to show ours.

“My blessing to the dear children. I long to see them, and their mother also. In Jacky’s cries with his teeth I often hear Sam’s. The Lord Jesus hear, and preserve, and bless you all !”

“London, Sept. 7th. My dearest Sarah,—You will catch our joy at the rebound. At Spitalfields this morning I testified repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He never fails to confirm this doctrine. After the sacrament I was carried out in prayer, particularly for our dear Colonel Galatin, hastening to his Father’s house, for poor deluded Mrs. G——, and for that proudest, stubbornest of men, Thomas Maxfield. Our absent friends were brought to my remembrance, with all our brethren and companions in tribulation; and I seemed to have faith for every one of them, that not one would be found among the goats in that day.

“We dined, a troop of us, at Mr. Judd’s. Thence I walked to Lydia Vandome’s, and gave her the sacrament. Mrs.

Ratcliffe was there, a lady from Bath, begotten again in ■ hymn of mine. She had heard me that evening, in deepest distress, and when she came home, opened on those words :—

Who is the trembling sinner, who
That owns eternal death his due ?
Waiting his fearful doom to feel,
And hanging o'er the mouth of hell ?
Peace, troubled soul, thou need'st not fear ;
Thy Jesus saith, 'Be of good cheer.'
Only on Jesu's blood rely ;
He died that thou might'st never die !

The Spirit applied the word 'thy Jesus' to her heart, and assured her, God for his sake had forgiven her. She continued unspeakably happy for two years, and is still among the children. She keeps her chariot merely to attend the preaching. We had great fellowship together in singing and prayer.

"I drank tea with Nanny Hervey, where I found two of my oldest children, full of faith and love. For an hour and a quarter I continued exhorting, comforting, and praying with the society, who quite filled the Foundery. Our children I remembered in an accepted time, and wrestled in faith for the condemned malefactors.

"Sept. 9th. Many thanksgiving-bills were put up on Sunday night for grace received at the chapel in the morning. Among others, one poor simple woman of eighty-seven was filled with the Comforter. Some of her words were, 'The Lord has put such faith into me as I never had before ; and I love Him with all my soul, and heart,—and lungs.' Brother Kemp, who gave me the relation, believes she is clearly justified. Seldom or never do I hear of any such good by my ministry at Bristol.

"This morning I spent an hour in friendly, close conference with George Whitefield, who is treated most magnificently by his own bigoted children for his love to us.

"I have favour with this people ; that is plain, whether I deserve it or not ; yet I rejoice to leave them for you. They shall not get me here again in haste, without my nurse and playfellows. My love to all. Farewell in Christ."

"Sept. 15th. Yesterday we triumphed from morning till

night. In the morning my subject was, 'We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.' Several received the blessing of the Gospel, and among others our dearest Mrs. Davis. Some time ago our happy friends would have said, she received a clean heart. She did certainly find power to trust in the Lord entirely, and believes through his grace she shall trust in the Lord for ever. 'Now,' said she, 'I find, both in my soul and in my body, that I shall be soon released.' In the afternoon my text was, 'His blood be on us, and on our children for ever.' The chapel was excessively full. Many had stayed there all day. Mr. Hall stood just behind me. The backsliders, and deniers of their Lord, were laid upon my heart. All, I am ready to believe, felt the virtue of that blood; or at least some benefit by it. Farewell in Christ."

While Mr. Charles Wesley thus applied himself with all diligence to his ministerial and pastoral duties, in an enfeebled state of health, he did not diminish aught of his labours as a Christian poet; but steadily kept in view the spiritual improvement of the church of God, by the publication of sacred verse. In the course of this year, 1766, he sent forth a new volume, entitled, "Hymns for Children, and others of Riper Years." It contains one hundred hymns, in a great variety of metres. It would perhaps be difficult to mention any uninspired book, that, in the same compass, contains so much evangelical sentiment. The hymns are full of instruction, and yet thoroughly devotional in their character. There is nothing puerile in them, either with respect to thought or expression. The language is simple, yet terse, pure, and strong. The topics which they embrace are the truths and facts of Christianity, especially in their bearing upon personal religion.

The volume quickly passed to a second edition, and ought never to have been suffered to remain out of print. In the hands of a Christian mother, it would form a valuable help in the task of education. Most of the hymns, if committed to memory, would at once inform the judgment and impress the heart. Some of them are intended for the use of young children, who have just begun to speak and think; others of them are adapted to the capacity and experience of adult Christians. The design of the whole is, not to amuse, but to

teach ; not to form the manners merely, but to discipline the understanding and conscience. The author leads the youthful mind to Christ, as a sacrifice for sin, as the fountain of grace, as the great example of all excellence, and as the supreme Lord and Judge. As a specimen of this manual, the hymn entitled “ Primitive Christianity ” is given.

PART I.

The Christians of old, united in one,
As sheep in a fold, were never alone ;
As birds of a feather, they flock'd to their nest,
And shelter'd together in Jesus's breast.

However employ'd, their joy was the same ;
They never were cloy'd with hymning the Lamb ;
Their sole recreation to sing of his praise,
And publish salvation by Jesus's grace.

Small learning they had, and wanted no more ;
Not many could read, but all could adore :
No help from the college or school they received,
Content with His knowledge in whom they believed.

No riches had they, but riches of grace,
No fondness for play, or passion for praise ;
No moments of leisure for trifling employs,
Possess'd of the pleasure, in God to rejoice.

Men in their own eyes were children again,
And children were wise and solid as men ;
The women were fearful of nothing but sin,
Their hearts were all cheerful, their consciences clean.

Wrapp'd up in their Lord, his service and love,
They lived and adored like angels above ;
To keep in his favour, their lives they laid down,
And now with the Saviour inherit the crown.

PART II.

O where are the men with virtue endow'd,
To live as did then the servants of God !
The ancient example, who shows us again,
Courageous to trample on pleasure and pain ?

O Jesus, on us the blessing bestow,
 Our infancy choose, thy glory to show ;
 In this generation thy witnesses raise,
 The heirs of salvation, the vessels of grace.

Accept our desire, and give us thy love,
 The children inspire with grace from above ;
 Purge out the old leaven, and early convert,
 And open a heaven of grace in our heart.

Begotten again, and principled right,
 Good works to maintain, and walk in thy sight,
 We then shall recover that vigour of grace,
 And gladly live over those primitive days.

Our moments below shall pleasantly glide,
 While nothing we know but Christ crucified ;
 Our whole conversation in songs shall approve
 Thy wonderful passion, thy ransoming love.

And if we must win the crown, like our God,
 And strive against sin, resisting to blood,
 We more than victorious o'er death shall arise,
 All happy and glorious with Christ in the skies.

In the course of the following year this pious and indefatigable man, whose genius seemed inexhaustible, published two other volumes of devotional poetry. One of these is entitled, “Hymns on the Trinity ;” and the other, “Hymns for the Use of Families, and on various Occasions.” The “Hymns on the Trinity” are an hundred and eighty in number. The greater part of them are founded upon particular passages of holy Scripture ; and the whole are arranged under five distinct heads :—Hymns on the Divinity of Christ ; on the Divinity of the Holy Ghost ; on the Plurality and Trinity of Persons in the Godhead ; on the Trinity in Unity ; Hymns and Prayers to the Trinity.*

* The publication of Mr. Charles Wesley’s “Hymns on the Trinity” was an innocent occasion of calling forth, after a lapse of several years, one of the most harsh and unjust censures that was ever passed upon his honoured brother. The Rev. William Jones, of Nayland, the friend and biographer of Bishop Horne, was the offender in this case. In the Life of that Prelate he says, when speaking of Mr. Wesley, “Among his own people he seemed to do more than he did. Of this I was informed by a bookseller, who, like others, had been injured in his trade by the encroachments of Mr. Wesley in the way of book-

Some persons have thought that the doctrine thus proposed is rather a matter of opinion than of practical import-

making; and I was witness to some instances of this myself. He put his name to a translation of Thomas à Kempis, as if the translation had been his own; but a friend showed me an old translation, with which it agreed, so far as we could see, in every word. He put his name to a 'Compendium of Philosophy,' though he tells us curiously in the preface, it was taken from the work of a Professor at Jena, in Germany: yet he must be allowed great merit in amplifying the work. He sold a work of mine, as if it had been an original work, partly copied, and partly put into English verse, without asking the consent, or making a word of acknowledgment in the title or preface, to the author. He was free to produce any possible good from any labour of mine, without being envied; but such proceedings have too much the appearance of party-craft to consist well with honest, unaffected piety."—Life of Dr. Horne, p. 109. Edit. 1831.

The answer to these serious allegations is easy. Mr. Wesley did not "put his name to a translation of Thomas à Kempis, as if the translation had been his own." His edition of Kempis was published in the year 1735, and bears the following title: "The Christian's Pattern; or, a Treatise of the Imitation of Christ. Written originally in Latin by Thomas à Kempis. With a Preface, containing an Account of the Usefulness of this Treatise; Directions for reading it with Advantage; and likewise *an Account of this Edition. Compared with the Original, and corrected throughout*, by John Wesley, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxon." Here is no intimation whatever, that "the translation was his own," but the direct contrary. Did ever translator, since the world began, say of his work, that it was "compared with the original, and corrected throughout?" To prevent the very possibility of mistake, the title refers to the preface for "an account of this edition;" and in that preface it is said, "Although this edition of the Christian Pattern be the same, as to the main of the translation, with that printed at London in the year 1677; yet it differs from it in the following particulars: First, in being divided, like the Latin, into distinct sentences. Secondly, in being closer to the original. Thirdly, in being plainer. Lastly, in being clearer." Mr. Wesley expatiates upon each of these particulars.

In all this, there is not only no apparent attempt to mislead, but the utmost openness and candour. Every means is used to avoid even the semblance of the dishonesty with which he is charged. So far was Mr. Jones from being a "witness" of what he alleges, that, had he examined the subject with even ordinary attention, he would have been a "witness" to the contrary, and would have rebuked his friend for criminating an innocent man.

Equally unjust is the censure upon Mr. Wesley on account of his "Compendium of Philosophy." His design was, to supply the common people, who had little money to expend in the purchase of books, and little time for reading, with a concise but comprehensive view of Natural Philosophy, that they might see and adore God in his works. He found a Latin treatise, written by John Francis Buddæus, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Jena, adapted to the end which he proposed. He therefore translated it into English, retrenching, enlarging, and altering every chapter, and almost every section, and illustrating and confirming the whole by copious notes. With the work in this shape he was not satisfied, and therefore in subsequent editions incorporated the

ance. But this is a fatal mistake. An acknowledgment of the Trinity in Unity lies at the foundation of all personal godliness. We can have no access to God, in any act of divine worship, but through the mediation of his Son, and

notes with the text. He is censured for "putting his name" to this work; but what "name" could he with truth prefix to it, but his own? In the form which it bore, it was the work of John Wesley, and of no other man upon earth. No one supposed that he had made all the philosophical experiments, the results of which he has laid before his readers, or visited all the burning mountains, and the localities of the various earthquakes, which he describes. Every one, of course, understood that the work, like all other similar publications, was a compilation. Like a wise man, Mr. Wesley availed himself of all the sources of information that were open to him; and like an honest man, he states in the preface what he had aimed at, and what he had done. By no just process of reasoning, yet known to the world, can it be shown that there was the slightest dishonesty in the form of these interesting and instructive volumes. If Mr. Wesley was entitled to "great merit for amplifying the work" of the Jena Professor, he was no less entitled to commendation for expunging its mistakes, and for rendering it available to the mere English reader, to whom but for him it would have remained a dead letter.

When Mr. Jones adds, "He sold a work of mine, as if it had been an original work," he says what is not true. Mr. Wesley never "sold a work" written by Mr. Jones; and was therefore under no obligation either to ask Mr. Jones's "consent," or to make any "acknowledgment." Nor did Mr. Charles Wesley commit the alleged fault, though his book on the Trinity furnished the occasion for the querulous charge. With the exception of the title, and the headings of the chapters, his book consists exclusively of hymns, and texts of holy Scripture. The hymns were not Mr. Jones's. He does not even lay claim to the "English verse:" and surely the texts of holy writ were as much Charles Wesley's, as they were Mr. Jones's, or those of any other man. If no person is at liberty to quote a text of Scripture, because another has quoted it before him, the Bible would long since have become a useless book. Mr. Jones himself acknowledged no such principle; and by what right would he impose it upon the Wesleys?

It is painful to see a man of Mr. Jones's elevated character, a Clergyman, a scholar, and a philosopher, writing with so little regard for either charity or truth. The fact is, he was offended with Mr. Wesley's irregularity. A bookseller, knowing his prejudices, and that anything against John Wesley would be acceptable, related some direct falsehoods to the disparagement of the man whom Mr. Jones disliked; and Mr. Jones, without due examination, adopted the falsehoods, sent them to the press, and transmitted them to posterity, with the sanction of his name, to the injury of Mr. Wesley, who was well known to be sleeping in his grave when this libel upon him was written. We will not throw back upon Mr. Jones the unjust censure which he has so unceremoniously hurled at Mr. Wesley, "Such proceedings have too much the appearance of party-craft to consist with honest, unaffected piety;" but we will say that such practices ought to be carefully avoided by every one who bears the name of Christian. If the New Testament is to be credited, truth and charity are too sacred to be trifled with.

the gracious aid of his Spirit. Pardon can only be obtained through the atonement and intercession of the Son of God ; and when obtained it is witnessed to the heart by the Holy Ghost, who also regenerates and sanctifies the believing penitent. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, thus revealed, are the one and undivided object of confidence and love ; and are worshipped as the living and only true God. There is not in the English language a volume that, in so small a compass, shows more clearly the scriptural doctrine on this subject, with its practical importance ; and it has this peculiar advantage, that it proposes the subject, not as a matter of controversy, but of faith, and adoration, of prayer, thanksgiving, and praise.

Mr. Charles Wesley was no speculatist in theology. To form human theories on the Trinity, he would have thought to be little less than blasphemy. Resting in the testimony of inspired Scripture, as understood by the church catholic, he adored the Father, as the Fountain of the Godhead ; the Son, as eternally begotten of the Father ; and the Holy Ghost, as eternally proceeding from both. So that he confessed the eternal Father, the eternal Son, and the eternal Spirit, distinct in personality, but perfectly one in nature and substance ; all uniting in the redemption and salvation of fallen man, and equally entitled to the absolute confidence, and love, and worship of “all in earth, and all in heaven.” He had some years before published a small tract of hymns and doxologies to the Holy Trinity ; but in the volume now printed he exhibits the subject of the Trinity in its full bearing. The last hymn in the volume is a very sublime and impressive composition. It is a prayer for the overthrow of the Mohammedan delusion, and the commencement of the millennial reign of Christ : subjects in which his friends Mr. Perronet and Mr. Hartley took a deep and solemn interest.

GREAT TRIUNE GOD, whose ruling power
Must prevalent o'er all appear,
Hasten the destined day and hour,
Establishing thy kingdom here :
Sublime on thy millennial throne,
Thee all thy saints expect to see,
While every tongue, like ours, shall own
Jehovah One in Persons Three.

Stretch out thine arm, Almighty King,
 Thine own omnipotence assume,
 The first and last dominion bring,
 To reign before thine ancients come :
 O might *we* at the time foretold
 See all things to thyself subdued,
 And every prostrate soul behold
 Adorers of the Triune God !

In answer to the chosen race,
 Who ceaseless for thy coming cry,
 Shorten the last vindictive days,
 And let the trump proclaim thee nigh :
 Return, thou once a Man of Woe,
 Distinguish'd by the crimson sign,
 And in thy dazzling Person show
 The glorious Plenitude Divine.

That wandering star, who blazed, and fell,
 And poison'd many a crystal stream,
 That bitter, first-born child of hell,
 No more permit him to blaspheme :
 Root out thine Unitarian foe,
 Nor longer let his place be found,
 The Crescent by the Cross o'erthrow,
 And loose the world in darkness bound.

It must be so : the day is near,
 The far-spent night will quickly end,
 And every eye discern Thee here,
 And saints perceive their King descend :
 When all are put beneath thy feet,
 And death, the latest foe, is slain,
 Then I shall mount thy azure seat,
 Then I shall in thy presence reign.

Mr. Charles Wesley's Family Hymn-book is a remarkable work. It consists, to a great extent, of hymns which he had written under circumstances of peculiar excitement, affecting him as a husband, a father, and the head of a family. Others of them were composed for the use of his pious friends in seasons of especial anxiety, sorrow, and joy. It is not probable that one of them was written with reference to an imaginary case, which possibly might occur. They are all the genuine effusions of his heart : a heart eminently tender, sympathetic, generous, and deeply imbued with Christian feeling. The hymns relate to domestic mercies, and domestic affliction, in

all their varieties of form ; including marriage, the birth of children, baptism, sickness, recovery, bereavements, the case of unconverted and persecuting relations, retirement into the country, removing to a new habitation. Notwithstanding the nature of these subjects, not one of the hymns contains a stanza that is either trite or mean. The most common concerns of life are dignified by Christian sentiment, expressed in language of almost unrivalled force and beauty ; and the spirit which pervades the entire book is that of enlightened and fervent devotion. No person of a pure mind can read this volume without loving its author. In admiration of the man, the poet is forgotten. The affectionate husband, the yearning father, the warm-hearted friend, the meek, submissive, praying, trusting, grateful Christian, is here seen in all his loveliness and glory ; though nothing could be farther from his thoughts than an exhibition of himself. His only design in publishing the workings of his own heart was, to assist Christian families, in all the affairs of life, devoutly to recognise the providence and grace of God.

The Family Hymn-book contains some verses which describe the author's feelings and state at the time of its publication. In the letters which he addressed to his wife a few months before, he refers to a project that they had formed, of removing to another house in Bristol. Michael's-hill was mentioned as the place which they had thought of for their future residence. On a former occasion he had intimated to her, that they should probably remove to London. To these schemes, and to the enfeebled state of his health, he alludes in these touching lines :—

The Son of man supplies
My every outward need,
Who had not, when He left the skies,
A place to lay his head :
He will provide my place,
And in due season show
Where I shall pass my few sad days
Of pilgrimage below.

No matter where, or how,
I in this desert live,
If when my dying head I bow,
Jesus my soul receive :

Bless'd with thy precious love,
 Saviour, 'tis all my care
 To reach the purchased house above,
 And find a mansion there.

Saviour, I would not take
 One step in life alone,
 Or dare the smallest motion make,
 Without thy counsel known :
 Thee I my Lord confess,
 In everything I see,
 And thou, by thine unerring grace,
 Shalt order all for me.

Surely thou wilt provide
 The place thou know'st I need,
 A solitary place to hide
 Thy hoary servant's head :
 Where a few moments more,
 Expecting my release,
 I may my father's God adore,
 And then depart in peace.

What matters it to me,
 When a few days are past,
 Where I shall end my misery,
 Where I shall breathe my last ?
 The meanest house or cot
 The hoary hairs may screen
 Of one who would be clean forgot,
 And live and die unseen.

Exposed I long have been
 In this bleak vale of tears,
 Midst scenes of vanity and sin
 Consumed my threescore years :
 I turn my face aside,
 Sick of beholding more,
 And wish the latest storm to' outride,
 And reach the happy shore.

As dead already here,
 Without desire or hope,
 Till from this earth I disappear,
 I give the creature up ;
 In temporal despair
 Contentedly abide,
 And in my flesh the tokens bear
 Of Jesus crucified.

Mr. Charles Wesley was sensible of the decay of his strength, and was therefore apprehensive, considering his age, that his labours would soon end ; and as his brother was still more advanced in life, it was doubtless a matter of some concern to them both, whether or not the sacred office would be perpetuated in his offspring. At the beginning of the year 1768, a third son was born to him ; and there seemed a fair probability that one of them might become a Minister of Christ. On the 15th of January John wrote to him, and thus alludes to the subject ; at the same time stating a fact relative to their family of singular curiosity. The nonconformity of their forefathers was of more ancient date than is generally apprehended.

“It is highly probable,” says he, “one of the three will stand before the Lord. But, so far as I can learn, such a thing has scarce been for these thousand years before, as a son, father, grandfather, *atavus*, *tritavus*, preaching the Gospel, nay, and the genuine Gospel, in a line. You know Mr. White, sometime Chairman of the Assembly of Divines, was my grandmother’s father.”

If it was hoped that the infant, who was called John James, would live to receive a dispensation of the Gospel, the expectation, as in many similar cases, was cut off. While the father was discharging his ministerial duties in London early in the following July, he received intelligence that its infant spirit had been caught up to paradise. The following is an extract of a letter which Mrs. Wesley sent to him :—

“My dearest Mr. Wesley,—This comes to acquaint you, that our dear little babe is no more. His agony is over ; but it was a hard struggle before he could depart. He was dying all yesterday, from ten o’clock ; and about nine last night he departed. He screamed three times about half-an-hour before he died, that he could be heard from nurse’s parlour to the other side of the street ; not through guilt, that is my comfort, but through extreme pain. Perhaps, was I of Calvin’s opinion, I might have attributed it to a different cause : but glory be to the Redeemer’s love, in declaring, for the consolation of distressed parents, that ‘of such is the kingdom of heaven !’ O that I may arrive as safely in the harbour of eternal peace !

“The rest of the children are well at present ; but we know

not how long they may be so. The small-pox is at the next door but one to us; and I fear for my little Sammy. I can add no more than, the united love of many here attends you. Mr. Roquet called to-day, and desired his; so did Mrs. Jones, of Fonmon; Mrs. Vigor, and Mr. and Mrs. Ellis, join the children and me in duty and love."

To this simple and affecting communication, Mr. Charles Wesley returned the following answer to his sorrowing wife. Happy the woman that had such a husband!

"'Father, not as I will, but as thou wilt.' 'Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.' Let my dearest companion in trouble offer up this prayer, with as much of her heart as she can: and God, who knoweth whereof we are made, and considereth that we are but dust, will, for Christ's sake, accept our weakest, most imperfect desires of resignation. I know the surest way to preserve our children is to trust them with Him, who loves them infinitely better than we can do. I received your trying news at nine this morning; walked directly with my sympathizing friend F—— to take a place. All full, but the Bath coach for to-morrow. I shall come thereby somewhat later to my beloved Sally, and Charley, and his sister. But the Lord is with you already. The Lord is with you always. This has been a solemn day. You must not deny my love to my sweet boy, if I am enabled to resign him for his heavenly Father to dispose of. I cannot doubt his wisdom or goodness. He will infallibly do what is best, not only for his own children, but for us, in time and eternity. Be comforted by this assurance. Many mourn with and pray for you, and your little ones. I shall tread on the heels of my letter, if the Lord prosper my journey. He comes with me. Let us confidently expect Him, the great Physician of soul and body. Peace be with you! May the Lord Jesus Himself speak it into your heart,—'My peace I give unto you!'"

From this letter it appears that Mr. Charles Wesley had made the necessary arrangements for visiting his wife in Bristol, and attending the funeral of his child. Something, however, with which we are not acquainted, occurred to prevent the fulfilment of his purpose by detaining him in London. Instead of her husband, therefore, Mrs. Wesley received a second letter, which she acknowledges in the fol-

lowing manner. Her Christian gentleness and resignation are very apparent. Though deprived of his presence and counsel, both at the death and funeral of her infant, and apprehending another of her children to be in imminent danger, she maintains a calm self-possession, and utters no unseemly lamentations: a strong intimation that she was not unworthy of the esteem and affection with which he invariably regarded her.

“ July 11th, 1768. I this day received both my dearest Mr. Wesley’s letters. You can sympathize with me, in the loss of my dear little babe: which is moderated to me by the small expectation I had of his life, together with the consideration of the sufferings he went through; which are now at an end; and he is eternally secured from the malice of men and devils. When I come to die, I shall be thankful. At present I can only say, ‘ The Lord is righteous in all his ways,’ and orders all things for good to his children. May I be found of that happy number, in the day when he makes up his jewels !

“ On Saturday evening the child was buried.

‘ Who next shall be summon’d away ?
My merciful God, is it I ? ’

“ I employed Birt, and desired the clerk to take care of the tomb-stone, &c. I hope it will not again be removed for the few that remain of our offspring; though I dread it for my dear Samuel. He eats but little animal food; and I intend to give him less, while the small-pox is in the neighbourhood. But I remember all these means, together with physic, were used for my dear Jacky, before he sickened, but to no purpose.

“ We shall be glad to see you returned, when you think you can leave London with freedom, knowing you can be spared: otherwise I would not wish you to neglect the public on my account, especially as your ministry is so much blessed in that place.

“ My dear Mrs. Vigor has shown her usual love to me in all my troubles, and unites with Mr. and Mrs. James, and Mrs. Jones, of Fonmon, in kind love. Charles and Sally send their duty.”

The subjoined letter, which was written in answer to this, shows that Mr. Charles Wesley had now determined to remove

his family to the neighbourhood of London ; his brother and all his friends there approving of this arrangement. The reasons for it are not stated, but may be easily conjectured. The society in the metropolis was larger and more important than that in Bristol, and therefore required greater pastoral care. His ministry was also more numerously attended there, and more successful. The musical education of his eldest son, it is probable, supplied an additional motive for the removal.

“ July 16th, 1768. My dearest Sally,—Our preparation could not save the first Jacky, because God had prepared a better thing for him. The means may keep Samuel with us. Let us be thankful that he still holds up. If he should have the distemper soon, I believe it will only lessen his beauty. I long to see him and you, but fear I must be detained another week in town. On Monday Mr. Kemp, and Beck, and I go to see a house at Hackney, and another at Newington, either of which he thinks will suit us exactly. If Beck and I are of the same judgment, we shall take it.

“ Write again, about Samuel particularly. Yesterday I dined at Islington, and shall on Monday again. Last night I was with the Committee, who are entirely devoted to our service. My brother himself is quite pleased with our having a house near London : so are all the people, which I need not tell you. On Thursday night the Foundery was crowded with serious hearers of every sort. My subject was, ‘ He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him.’

“ Last Wednesday I was at Lady Robert’s,* and walked with her over all her gardens, the pleasantest I have seen. Charles and Sally would be transported with them. I have as good as promised to bring you thither.

“ My brother wants me to meet him at the Conference. My first business is, to carry you to Wales ; but first of the first, to visit you, if the Lord permit, at Bristol. My love to all there, particularly dearest Mrs. Vigor.

“ I finish this at Lewisham. Our beloved Mrs. Blackwell wishes you all happiness from her sick-bed of pain. She is come very near the crisis, yet resigned and happy. Such may I be when in her circumstances ! The Lord bless and preserve you all ! Adieu ! ”

* Lady Robert Manners, formerly Miss Degge.

CHAPTER XXII.

EARLY in the year 1770 Mr. Charles Wesley received a letter from his friend Mr. Whitefield, then labouring with his wonted energy, zeal, and hope, upon the vast continent of America. The letter was written in Georgia, and gives an encouraging account of the progress of the Gospel in that colony, where he and the Wesleys began their ministerial career. Upwards of thirty years had now elapsed since Mr. John and Charles Wesley left their charge in that place, being treated with cruelty and injustice by a disobedient and a gainsaying people. It must have afforded them a high gratification, to learn that the children of the original settlers, to whom they ministered the word amidst bitter discouragements and opposition, cherished a love of the truth, and paid a becoming attention to their spiritual interests.

“Bethesda, Jan. 15th, 1770. My very dear old Friend,—I wrote to your honoured brother from on board ship. Since then what wonders have I seen! what innumerable mercies have I received! a long, trying, but I humbly hope profitable, passage. My poor, feeble labours are owned in Charlestown; and everything is more than promising in Georgia. The increase of this once-so-much-despised colony is incredible. Good, I trust, is doing at Savannah, and Bethesda is like to blossom as a rose: the situation most delightful, very salubrious, and everything excellently adapted for the intended purpose. All admire the goodness, strength, and beauty of the late improvements. In a few months the intended plan, I hope, will be completed, and a solid, lasting foundation laid for the support and education of many as yet unborn. Nothing is wanted but a judicious and moderately-learned, single-hearted master. Surely the glorious Emmanuel will point out one in his own due time. Do pray. I am sure, prayers put up above thirty years ago are now answering: and I am persuaded we shall yet see greater things than these. Who would have thought that such a worthless crea-

ture as this letter-writer should live to be fifty-five years old? I can only sit down and cry, 'What hath God wrought!' My bodily health is much improved, and my soul is on the wing for a northern Gospel range.

"You and all your connexions will not cease to pray for me. I would fain begin to do something for my God. My heart's desire and incessant prayer to the God of my life is, that the word of the Lord may prosper in your hands, and run and be glorified more and more. O to work whilst it is day! O to be found all on the full stretch for Him who was stretched, and groaned, and bled, and died for us! Unutterable love! I am lost in wonder and amazement, and therefore, although with regret, I must hasten to subscribe myself, my very dear Sir, less than the least of all.

"P.S. Cordial love awaits your whole self, and inquiring friends, and all that love the everlasting, altogether-lovely Jesus in sincerity. I hope to write to your honoured brother soon. Brethren, pray for us."

This appears to have been the last communication that Mr. Charles Wesley received from his estimable friend. Mr. Whitefield continued his labours till the succeeding autumn, when his strength failed, and he ceased to preach and live. "He was not; for God took him." After spending about a month in Boston and its neighbourhood, preaching every day, he went to Old-York; preached there, Sept. 27th, and at Portsmouth the day after. The next morning he set out for Boston; but before he arrived at Newbury, where he had engaged to minister the word of life, he was importuned to preach. The house not being large enough to contain the people, he addressed them in an open field. As he had been infirm for several weeks, this so exhausted his strength, that when he came to Newbury he could not get out of the ferry-boat without the help of two men. In the evening, however, he recovered his spirits, and appeared with his usual cheerfulness. He went to his chamber at nine o'clock, his fixed time, from which no company could divert him, and slept better than he had done for some weeks before. He rose at four in the morning, and went into his closet, when it was observed that he was unusually long in private. Returning to his companion, he threw himself on the bed, and lay about ten minutes. He then fell upon his

knees, and prayed most fervently to God, that, if it were His will, he might that day finish his Master's work. He then desired his man to call Mr. Parsons, the Clergyman, at whose house he was: but in a minute, before Mr. Parsons could reach him, he died, without a sigh or groan.* It was the morning of the Sabbath-day; and instead of addressing the eager crowds who anticipated the pleasure of hearing him, and of uniting with him in the worship of God, he went to join the general assembly, and church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven.

The report of Mr. Whitefield's death caused a feeling of deep regret among his numerous friends, both in England and America; and many sermons were preached and published on the melancholy occasion. No men showed greater respect to his memory than Mr. John and Charles Wesley, with whom he had maintained a sincere friendship through the greater part of his life. At the request of the executors, Mr. John Wesley preached Mr. Whitefield's funeral sermon, first in the Tabernacle of Tottenham-court-road, and afterwards in that of Moorfields. The sermon, which was read at both places to an immense concourse of people, and was forthwith published, contains a character of Mr. Whitefield, equally just and honourable. Mr. Wesley also preached on the same occasion at the Tabernacle in Greenwich, in compliance with the request of the Trustees of that place of worship. On a subsequent day he preached on the same subject at Deptford; remarking in his Journal, "In every place I wish to show all possible respect to the memory of that great and good man."

Mr. Charles Wesley was neither unaffected nor silent when he received the distressing intelligence that his friend was no more. He wept at the remembrance of one who was his son in the Gospel, one of his earliest religious companions, and for many years one of the most useful men of his age. He poured forth the sorrows of his heart in an "Elegy on the Death of the Rev. George Whitefield;" which he immediately printed in a handsome octavo pamphlet, every line of which appears to have flowed from his inmost soul. It describes, in pure and sterling English, the piety, zeal, talents, energy, and use-

* Wesley's Works, vol. vi., pp. 173, 174.

fulness of the deceased ambassador of Christ, and glorifies God in him, as the sole author of all the good that he possessed, and that he was a means of producing in others. This beautiful poem, for such it is, has long been out of print, and therefore is known to few readers, even among those who take an interest in the history of these men of God.

Several notices of Mr. Whitefield's character and personal history have already been given in these volumes, from which some opinion may be formed of him, both as a man and a Minister of Christ. He was not remarkable either for the depth or the comprehensiveness of his views, or for the extent of his erudition. Nor did he ever excel in authorship, or as a reasoner. Had he published nothing, his character would have been far higher in the estimation of posterity than it is ever likely to be, now that so many of his sermons and other compositions have been committed to the press. The fame of his preaching would have filled the world with wonder, had the whole of his discourses been confined to the pulpit, and none of his writings appeared in print.

In his spirit he was eminently affectionate, and susceptible of grateful feeling. He loved his friends most cordially, and never forgot a favour that was shown him. Yet he possessed great firmness and independence of mind; so that when his judgment and conscience were convinced, nothing could move him from his purpose, or induce him to deviate from what he believed to be the path of duty. For Mr. John and Charles Wesley his respect was all but unbounded; yet when he had embraced the Calvinian view of predestination, he chose rather to separate from them than deny what he believed to be the truth. Nor could any fear of ecclesiastical censure restrain him from calling sinners to repentance in fields and market-places, when he thought that the spiritual necessities of the people, and the honour of his Saviour, rendered these irregularities matter of duty. He feared no man's displeasure in turning sinners to Christ.

As a Preacher he was unrivalled. His heart burned with love to Christ, and yearned with compassion for the souls of unconverted men. His eloquence was inspired, and sanctified, and made effective, by the love of Christ. In all his ministrations, this was the master-principle. Yet he possessed personal advantages to which few men can lay equal

claim. His voice was musical, strong, and sonorous, so as generally to reach, without difficulty, the vast assemblages of people by whom he was surrounded. He had a fluency of expression which few public speakers can command, so as never to be at a loss for the most appropriate words to convey his meaning. In pleading with sinners he often wept aloud, stamped with his feet, and uttered warnings, exhortations, and entreaties the most impassioned and overwhelming. His person was graceful, especially in the earlier period of his life, and his action corresponded with the subjects upon which he was discoursing. There were certain favourite topics which he often introduced into his sermons, especially the sufferings of Christ; and though his stated hearers knew beforehand the very expressions that would be used, the tones in which they would be uttered, and the action which would accompany them, these topics never failed to produce their legitimate impression. They were never heard without tears. Mr. John Wesley had preached in the open air in Georgia before Mr. Whitefield was ordained; but Mr. Whitefield led the way in field-preaching in England, and successfully urged both the Wesleys to follow his example. In this, as well as in other departments of ministerial service, Mr. Whitefield was a moral hero. Not only did thousands of the common people, both in Europe and America, hear from his lips the words of revealed truth, but also several of the nobility. When Lady Huntingdon opened her house in London for regular preaching, on a week-day, several from the higher classes of society were his stated hearers there; and even Deistical Statesmen, such as Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, drawn by the report of his eloquence, heard from him the sacred truths of Christianity. He was a man of uncommon powers, fitted by the providence and grace of God to awaken the consciences of an ignorant, irreligious, and slumbering people.

The death of Mr. Whitefield, connected with the very uncertain state of his own health, appears to have made a deep impression upon the mind of Mr. Charles Wesley. He was led to a serious consideration of his own removal into the spiritual and eternal world. It had long been the habit of his life to embody his religious feelings in hymns of prayer and praise to God; and in the present instance he was induced to review the past with penitence and gratitude, and

to anticipate the future with desire and hope. In less than two years, therefore, from the decease of his friend, he published a small volume, now extremely rare, entitled, "Preparation for Death, in several Hymns." They are forty in number, and are indeed appropriate to the occasion on which they were written; expressing deep humiliation and shame before the Lord, at the remembrance of past unfaithfulness, with an absolute reliance upon the sacrifice of Christ, for present pardon, for perfected holiness, and for final acceptance with God. In these most devout compositions the vanity of the world is strikingly acknowledged, with the frailty and helplessness of man, especially in sickness, age, and infirmity; and earnest longings are expressed for that heavenly rest, where there is no more pain, and where all is quietness and assurance for ever. A more pious manual was never sent forth from the press. It relates, with solemn interest, to a period which cannot be far from any one; and he is the wisest and the happiest man who is the best prepared for that certain event.

Mr. Whitefield caused the first separation among the Methodists, by his zealous inculcation of the peculiar tenets of Calvinism. But the personal controversy which was thus excited was of short continuance, so far as the press was concerned. When Mr. John Wesley had published his "Sermon on Free Grace," Mr. Whitefield his "Letter" in reply, and Mr. Charles Wesley his "Hymns on God's Everlasting Love," the contending parties "agreed to differ." Each maintained his own views, and recommended them both from the pulpit and the press, but without any mention of each other's names. Notwithstanding their differences of opinion, they spoke respectfully of each other in public, and occasionally exchanged pulpits, as an open declaration of their mutual esteem and love. But it was not likely that this state of things would be permanent. The questions at issue were of so stirring a kind, that a full discussion of them, soon or late, must have appeared inevitable to every intelligent observer. Scarcely were Mr. Whitefield's remains cold in the grave before the smothered flame was rekindled.

The doctrine of justification by faith was one of the most prominent tenets of Methodism, as it was of the Protestant

Reformation. But every student of ecclesiastical history must perceive the danger of extremes. Such is the infirmity of human nature, that nothing can be more common than for the teachers of religion, in avoiding one extreme, to run into another of the opposite kind. In opposing the pharisaic spirit, which was so generally prevalent in England, many persons who had been concerned in the late revival of Christian godliness preached justification by faith, so as to countenance the Antinomian delusion; if not intentionally, yet by a misleading phraseology. Some of Mr. Wesley's Preachers, with all their supposed legality, were not free from blame in this matter. Of this their venerable father, Mr. John Wesley, was aware; and applied a seasonable remedy to the existing evil. One of the most important objects of his yearly Conference with them was the preservation among them of a unity in doctrine and operation, and the maintenance of a pure discipline.

In the Conference of 1770, which was held in London, the question, "What can be done to revive the work of God where it is decayed?" was discussed, and various suggestions were offered. The result of the whole was a strong recommendation that the Preachers should visit the people from house to house; assist in the circulation of the cheap religious books, of which a large assortment had been prepared; preach frequently in the open air, and regularly at five o'clock in the morning; encourage lively singing in the congregations; observe a quarterly fast in the societies; meet the children of their people weekly, for the purpose of catechetical instruction; and so arrange their plans of labour as to allow each Preacher to attend the service of the established Church on two Sundays every month. To these directions were added the following, relative to the substance of their ministrations:—

"Take heed to your doctrine. We said in 1744, 'We have leaned too much towards Calvinism.' Wherein?

"1. With regard to *man's faithfulness*. Our Lord himself taught us to use the expression; and we ought never to be ashamed of it. We ought steadily to assert, on his authority, that if a man is not 'faithful in the unrighteous mammon,' God will not give him the true riches.

"2. With regard to *working for life*. This also our Lord

has expressly commanded us. 'Labour,' ἐργαζέσθε, literally, 'work for the meat that endureth to everlasting life.' And, in fact, every believer, till he comes to glory, works *for* as well as *from* life.

"3. We have received it as a maxim, that a man is to do nothing in order to justification. Nothing can be more false. Whoever desires to find favour with God should 'cease from evil, and learn to do well.' Whoever repents, should do 'works meet for repentance.' And if this is not *in order* to find favour, what does he do them for?

"Review the whole affair.

"1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God?

"He that now believes in Christ, with a loving and obedient heart.

"2. But who among those who never heard of Christ?

"He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, according to the light he has.

"3. Is this the same with 'he that is sincere?'

"Nearly, if not quite.

"4. Is not this salvation by works?

"Not by the *merit* of works, but by works as a *condition*.

"5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years?

"I am afraid, about words.

"6. As to merit itself, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded 'according to our works,' yea, 'because of our works.' How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works?* And how differs this from, *secundum merita operum?* as our *works deserve?* Can you split this hair? I doubt I cannot.

"7. The grand objection to one of the preceding propositions is drawn from matter of fact. God does, in fact, justify those who by their own confession neither feared God nor wrought righteousness. Is this an exception to the general rule?

"It is a doubt, God makes any exception at all. But how are we sure that the person in question never did fear God and work righteousness? His own saying so is not proof; for we know how all that are convinced of sin undervalue themselves in every respect.

"8. Does not talking of a justified or a sanctified *state*

tend to mislead men? almost naturally leading them to trust in what was done in one moment? Whereas we are every hour and every moment pleasing or displeasing to God, according to our works: according to the whole of our inward tempers, and our outward behaviour.”

Every one must at once perceive that these propositions were not designed for popular use. They were theological theses, submitted by Mr. Wesley to the consideration of his Preachers, and intended to guard the evangelical doctrine of salvation by grace from Antinomian abuses. Had he been addressing himself to general readers, he would have expressed his meaning more at large, and so as to prevent the possibility of misapprehension: a precaution which he deemed unnecessary when he was writing to his Preachers, who thoroughly understood both his general doctrine, and his present purpose. The doctrinal alarm contained in the Minutes was as seasonable as it was important, and was dictated by sound discretion. The vile Antinomianism, the encroachments of which they were intended to resist, is one of the greatest evils that ever afflicted the church, and obstructed the work of God. Notwithstanding the obvious design of the Minutes, they were an occasion of calling forth against the author hostilities unexampled in severity, and which have never ceased to this day. In speaking to men who knew his whole creed, he did not consider it requisite to go into other points, in which they were all agreed; but he no more intended to deny his former tenets than to turn Mahometan. Justification by faith, for instance, had, up to this period, been the most prominent subject of his ministry, as it continued to be till the day of his death.

When Mr. Wesley published the Minutes of 1770, the peculiar friendship for him which Lady Huntingdon formerly cherished had for some time been partially withdrawn. At the beginning of her religious course, he was a means of great spiritual good to her; and she long returned his kindness and fidelity with every expression of esteem and attachment. She entertained all his theological views, even those relating to the question of Christian perfection; and she strengthened his hands when a separation from the Moravians was deemed necessary, and some of his best friends forsook him. But at length her opinions underwent an alteration.

She formed an acquaintance with Mr. Whitefield, whom she justly admired, and after his example embraced the Calvinian theory of absolute predestination. Both before and after this change in her sentiments, her piety was unquestionable, and her zeal exemplary. She was never ashamed of her Christian profession, but nobly confessed her Lord before the higher classes of society, with whom her rank entitled her to associate, and used all her influence to bring others to a saving knowledge of Christ. Having opened her house in London for the preaching of God's word, with encouraging success, she proceeded to the purchase and erection of chapels in fashionable cities and watering-places, which were supplied to a great extent by Ministers of the established Church, many of whom were favourable to her Ladyship's Calvinistic views, and were attended by large congregations. She had also formed a College at Trevecka, in Wales, for the training of Ministers; so that she was at the head of a numerous body of people, and had the direct countenance of a majority of the evangelical Clergy, not a few of whom treated Mr. Wesley with coldness and reserve because of his firm denial of their favourite tenets of absolute election, and final perseverance. He annoyed them grievously by pressing upon them the dreadful counterpart of their doctrine,—the fixed and hopeless reprobation of the non-elect. He believed that her Ladyship, with several of her confidential friends, were jealous of his power, while they disliked his theology.

It is not therefore surprising, that when the Minutes made their appearance, she condemned them in the strongest terms; declared that she could even “burn against them;” and determined that if any of the students in her College agreed with Mr. Wesley in these doctrinal propositions, he should be dismissed. Mr. Fletcher, the devout Vicar of Madeley, was the President of the institution; and Mr. Joseph Benson the Classical Tutor, having been placed in that office at the recommendation of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher. He had given proofs of superior piety and talent; but having avowed his concurrence with Mr. Wesley, he was forthwith discharged, with a certificate, stating that no complaint lay against either his personal character, his scholarship, or his ability to teach. Mr. Fletcher, who was as decidedly anti-Calvinistical as Mr. Wesley, felt that when his

friend was discarded, he could not honourably retain his connexion with the College. As all his services were gratuitous, and his reputation for piety, genius, and uprightness was high, her Ladyship doubtless found it a difficult task to command him to retire: he therefore resolved to tender his resignation, and spare her the pain of an ungracious act.

In this state of affairs Mr. John Wesley felt it his duty to write to Lady Huntingdon in a tone of expostulation, and of self-defence. The letter has not been published; but the temper of the writer may be gathered from his correspondence with Mr. Benson, which was carried on at the same time. Under the date of Nov. 30th, 1770, he says, "For several years I had been deeply convinced, that I had not done my duty with regard to that valuable woman; that I had not told her what, I was thoroughly assured, no one else would dare to do, and what I knew she would bear from no other person, but possibly might bear from me. But being unwilling to give her pain, I put it off from time to time. At length I did not dare to delay any longer, lest death should call one of us hence. So I at once delivered my own soul, by telling her all that was in my heart. It was *my business*, my proper business, so to do; as none else either could or would do it. Neither did I at all take too much upon me. I know the office of a Christian Minister. If she is not profited, it is her own fault, not mine. I have done my duty. I do not know there is one charge in that letter, which is either unjust, unimportant, or aggravated; any more than that against the doggerel hymns, which are equally an insult upon poetry and common sense." About a month afterwards he adds, "This morning I have calmly and coolly read over my letter to Lady Huntingdon. I still believe every line of it is true. And I am assured I spoke the truth in love. It is great pity any who wish her well should skin over the wounds which are there searched. As long as she resents that office of true esteem, her grace can be but small."

The letter of Mr. Wesley was not received by her Ladyship in the spirit which these notices concerning it express. From this period she appears to have cherished towards him a feeling of deep and resolute hostility. As he was anxious to give

no just offence to any one, he examined the Minutes again and again, with the utmost care; and the result was an increased conviction of their truth, and of their seasonableness at that time. He felt therefore that he could neither retract nor soften them without violating his conscience. Writing to one of his correspondents in Bath, he says, "At the instance of some who were frightened thereby, I have reviewed them over and over; I have considered them in every point of view; and truly the more I consider them, the more I like them; the more fully I am convinced, not only that they are true, agreeable both to Scripture and sound experience, but that they contain truths of the deepest importance, and such as ought to be continually inculcated by those who would be pure from the blood of all men."

Equally fixed and determined were the adversaries of these doctrinal propositions. The next Methodist Conference was to be held in Bristol, early in the ensuing August; and it was resolved by Lady Huntingdon, and Mr. Shirley, (who acted as her agent in the whole business,) to get up an anti-Wesleyan demonstration in that city, at the same time. To effect this object the following letter was printed, and widely circulated:—

"Sir,—Whereas Mr. Wesley's Conference is to be held at Bristol, on Tuesday the 6th of August next, it is proposed by Lady Huntingdon, and many other Christian friends, (real Protestants,) to have a Meeting at Bristol, at the same time, of such principal persons, both Clergy and laity, who disapprove of the underwritten Minutes; and as the same are thought injurious to the very fundamental principles of Christianity, it is further proposed, that they go in a body to the said Conference, and insist upon a formal recantation of the said Minutes; and in case of a refusal, to publish their Protest against them. Your presence, Sir, on this occasion, is particularly requested: but if it should not suit your convenience to be there, it is desired that you will transmit your sentiments on the subject to such persons as you think proper to produce them. It is submitted to you, whether it would not be right, in the opposition to be made to such a dreadful heresy, to recommend it to as many of your Christian friends, as well of the Dissenters, as of the established Church, as you

can prevail on to be there, the cause being of so general a nature. I am, Sir,

“Your obedient servant,

“WALTER SHIRLEY.” *

To this letter was affixed an extract from the Minutes, which were alleged to be heretical, and a copy of the Protest which the intended assembly was to adopt, in case Mr. Wesley and his Preachers should refuse to alter their creed, at the dictation of the parties who modestly assumed “dominion over their faith.” That Mr. Wesley might be acquainted with the process which was going on against him, a copy of the Circular was forwarded to his brother, as soon as it was printed, accompanied by the following letter from Lady Huntingdon :—

“Bath, June 8th, 1771. Dear Sir,—Enclosed you have your brother’s Minutes, sent with those resolutions taken in consequence of their appearing in the world, and that under the proper explanation of them, viz., ‘Popery Unmasked.’ They have long affected my mind with deep concern; and thinking that all ought to be deemed Papists who did not disown them, I readily complied with a proposal of an open disavowal of them. The friendship I have endeavoured to show you and him for so many years could never have been less, but for that confession your brother has made of *his* creed. I can therefore look upon what I do, as no more than bearing an honest testimony, in that simplicity and godly sincerity with which I have desired to hold the fundamental principles of that Church to which I belong, and universally with all the Reformed and Protestant Churches in the world. I shall ever, from Scripture, as well as the happy demonstration of truth to my own conscience, maintain the sufficiency of that glorious sacrifice for sinners as the *whole* of my salvation, abhorring all merit in man, and giving that glory to Jesus Christ, which alone to Him eternally belongs. You must see in this view, that neither partiality nor prejudice has

* The following postscript was subjoined to this letter:—“Your answer is desired, directed to the Countess of Huntingdon, or the Rev. Mr. Shirley, or John Lloyd, Esq., in Bath, or Mr. James Ireland, Bristol, or to Thomas Powis, Esq., at Berwick, near Shrewsbury, or to Richard Hill, Esq., at Hawkstone, near Whitchurch, Shropshire. Lodgings will be provided. Inquire at Mr. Ireland’s, Bristol.”

anything to do in this whole affair. Principles that make shipwreck of faith, and of course of a good conscience, are what I have to object to; and no gloss, ever so finely drawn over these apostate sentiments, can alter their nature or consequence to me. Things of such vast importance ever exclude the man. He is, like every other man, weak and insufficient, and does therefore demand a Christian temper of opposition, and his infirmities tenderly covered: but his principles set up another Gospel, and so exclude that of Jesus Christ, and thus expose thousands of immortal souls to the just suspicions of denying the only Lord God that bought them, and in civil as well as religious professors make us appear rebels to God our King, and the most wicked enemies of our country. None can blame any who from such withdraw themselves.

“As you have no part in this matter, I find it difficult to blame your brother to you; while as an honest man I must pity and not less regard you, as you must suffer equal disgrace, and universal distrust, from the supposed union with him. I know you so well, and believe the Lord who brings light with truth will also show you, that no mean disguises, or a less interesting point, could thus influence me in that stand I make, and which appears to me of that consequence to the salvation of souls.

“May every best blessing attend you; and may you be found faithful in life and in death to Him who has so loved us, and to whom, throughout all eternity, all praise and glory our heaven must ever resound with. I am, dear Sir,

“Your ever faithful and sincere friend and servant,
for Christ’s sake.

“The copy enclosed is the first that has been sent out by me to any one. I have done this in order that with the greatest openness your brother might be informed by you.”

Few men respected Lady Huntingdon more than Mr. Charles Wesley. For many years he had lived in habits of intimacy with her, and corresponded with her; and he with his family had received from her many acts of substantial kindness, of which he was deeply sensible. But her attack upon the good name of his brother produced an effect the reverse of what she intended. He knew his brother’s infirmities better than she did, and he also knew his brother’s sterling worth. He knew that John Wesley was no “Papist,”

either masked or “unmasked,” but as “real a Protestant” as those who appropriated to themselves exclusively the honourable title. He knew well that his brother was no “rebel to God our King,” nor “wicked enemy of his country,” though traduced under these characters by one of his spiritual children. With meekness, therefore, but with instinctive firmness and promptitude, Mr. Charles Wesley resented the attempt to alienate him from the brother of his heart, to whom he had always yielded a just preference. What he thought of the most unbecoming and unfeminine letter of Lady Huntingdon, may be gathered from the two short but significant sentences which he inscribed on the back of it: “Lady Huntingdon’s LAST. UNANSWERED BY JOHN WESLEY’S BROTHER!”

In what manner the calumnious Circular, which was entrusted to Mr. Charles Wesley, was communicated to John, we know not; but as he was not himself inclined to surrender that liberty of speech which Lady Huntingdon wished to restrict, so he certainly did not advise his brother tamely to submit to her dictation as to what he should publish. On the 6th of July following, he says in a letter to John, “I have just finished Brandt’s ‘History of the Synod of Dort.’ Cannot you oblige us with a short extract out of him? out of ‘Redemption Redeemed?’* or whom you choose? I verily think, you are *called* to drive reprobation back to its own place.”

In their further correspondence on the subject, Mr. John Wesley makes the following communication to Charles. It was written a few days before the Conference began, and shows that, though his name was cast out as evil, his conscience was pure, and therefore his manly spirit was unsubdued. “We cannot put out what we never put in. I do not use the word *merit*. I never did, neither do now, contend for the use of it. But I ask you, or any other, a plain question. And do not cry, ‘Murder!’ but give me an answer. What is the difference between *mereri*, and *to deserve*? or between *deserving*, and *meritum*? I say still, I cannot tell. Can you? Can Mr. Shirley, or any man living? In asking this question, I neither plead for merit, nor against it. I

* An elaborate work in defence of General Redemption, by the celebrated John Goodwin.

have nothing to do with it. I have declared a thousand times, there is no goodness in man till he is justified; no merit, either before or after; that is, taking the word in its proper sense: for in a loose sense, *meritorious* means no more than *rewardable*.

“As to reprobation, seeing they have drawn the sword, I throw away the scabbard. I send you a specimen. Let fifteen hundred be printed as soon as you please.”

It would be difficult, in the entire range of ecclesiastical history, to find an instance of greater impertinence than this entire proceeding of Lady Huntingdon and her kinsman. They assume authority publicly to brand Mr. Wesley as a heretic of the worst kind, a heretic whose doctrine affected not the circumstantials of religion merely, but “the very fundamental principles of Christianity,” merely because he asserted the conditionality of the covenant of grace: a tenet which had been avowed and defended by many of the wisest and holiest men that ever lived. Richard Baxter, for instance, has said far stronger things on the necessity of obedience than Mr. Wesley had ever advanced.

Her Ladyship and Mr. Shirley also claim authority over the conscience and understanding of Mr. Wesley, and over those of the entire body of his Preachers, as well as a right, at their own pleasure, to intrude into the private assembly of these Ministers. Without asking permission, they propose, accompanied by others like-minded with them, to go to the Conference, not even to teach or expostulate with the ignorant and erring men there assembled, but to demand “a formal recantation” of their theological principles. An Englishman’s house is no longer his castle when these personages have a claim to make in behalf of their own creed.

They even treat the people whom they invite to meet them with little more respect than the Methodist Preachers. For while they summon all classes of religious people to Bristol, they tell these strangers what to do when assembled. A form of a protest is provided for them; so that the Clergy and laity, Churchmen and Dissenters, are to act as these modest directors shall dictate!

Never were rashness and presumption more effectually rebuked than on this occasion. Many copies of the Circular, we are informed, were sent forth, in all directions; and every

person who received one was urged to press the matter upon his neighbours, and secure as numerous an attendance at Bristol as possible. What then was the result of all this mighty preparation? Absolutely nothing. From all that appears, neither man, woman, nor child, repaired to Bristol in compliance with the summons, either to beard Mr. Wesley and the Conference, or to adopt the "protest." The promised "lodgings" were unoccupied. The "protest" remained in the pocket of the party by whom it was written. No stranger showed his face in the city.

It is natural to inquire, what could be the reason of this failure. Was it that there were no religious people in the land who disapproved of the Minutes? Far from it. Multitudes, both in the Church and out of it, were decidedly opposed to them, even for this one sentence: "We have leaned too much towards Calvinism." Many of the evangelical Clergy were favourable to Calvin's theory, as were the great body of Dissenters. Why then did they not obey the summons which called them to Bristol? Simply because the entire movement was unjust and ridiculous. What right had Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley to impose their creed upon Mr. Wesley, any more than he had to impose his upon them? Suppose Mr. Wesley had been weak enough to invite all sorts of people to meet him at Trevecka, and to demand of Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley, with the tutors and students of the College there, a formal recantation of the doctrine of absolute election to eternal life, he would have made himself a laughing-stock to all England. If her Ladyship and her kinsman could not see the unseemly position in which they placed themselves, other people could see it, and blush for the folly which it betrayed.

When it was found that the call which was given to the Clergy and laity was not responded to, Lady Huntingdon and Mr. Shirley both altered their tone towards Mr. Wesley. On the day before the Conference met, each of them addressed a letter to him, expressing regret that their printed Circular was drawn up in unbecoming language, declaring that they meant no personal offence, and requesting to know whether it would be agreeable to Mr. Wesley and his Preachers, that a deputation should attend the Conference, for the purpose of coming to a better understanding. Mr. Wesley returned a

verbal answer, inviting Mr. Shirley and his friends to come on the *third day* after the Conference had assembled ; thus teaching them that he would not allow them to intrude into his Conference at their pleasure. If they thought that Calvinism placed them above English law and good manners, it was requisite that they should be better taught. Eight persons attended on the day of the muster, all of whom were either dependent upon Lady Huntingdon, or under her personal influence. At the head of these was Mr. Shirley, her Ladyship's cousin, who was accompanied by Mr. Glascot and Mr. Owen, two of her Preachers ; by Mr. Lloyd, of Bath, and Mr. Ireland, of Bristol, whose names appear in the Circular, and who were therefore pledged to support its object ; by two students belonging to her College at Trevecka ; and by Mr. Winter, who had accompanied Mr. Whitefield to America, and was now under her Ladyship's direction. Such men as Venn, Romaine, Madan, and Berridge, with the entire body of the Dissenters, stood aloof from the fraternity. The Calvinistical Clergy did not like the doctrine of the Minutes any more than Mr. Shirley or Lady Huntingdon did ; but they knew that John Wesley was "in Christ before" they were ; that he had by the grace of God led the way in that revival of spiritual religion, the benefits of which they enjoyed in common with thousands more ; and they esteemed him on account of his talents, erudition, piety, labours, usefulness, and age. They could not therefore treat him with rudeness and public disrespect, nor connect themselves with the Circular letter, which was a dishonour to all the parties that identified themselves with it. The intemperate language in which it was expressed, and the offensive proposals which it contained, were alike revolting to every generous and candid mind. Even those who had drawn it up, and sent it forth, were ashamed of it, when they had ascertained the public feeling. Lady Huntingdon confessed in her letter to Mr. Wesley, just before the Conference assembled, that her own friends, as well as his, were offended with its tone and object. And well they might ; for it was thoroughly un-English in its character, and conceived in the haughty, sullen, and intolerant spirit of the Synod of Dort, whose creed it was intended to promote. The parties concerned in it wanted nothing but the civil power to give

effect to their purpose ; and then woe to John Wesley and his anti-Calvinistical Preachers !

On the entrance of the deputation into the Conference, which was unusually large in consequence of the trumpet of opposition which Mr. Shirley had blown, Mr. Wesley engaged in prayer. Mr. Shirley then, at his own request, read to the Conference the letters which he and Lady Huntingdon had addressed to Mr. Wesley four days before. When this was done, he expressed a “hope that the submission made was satisfactory to the gentlemen of the Conference. This was admitted ; but then it was urged, that as the offence given by the Circular letter had been very public, so ought the letter of submission.” * To this Mr. Shirley immediately consented.

Mr. Wesley then stood up, and stated, that for more than thirty years he had invariably preached the doctrine of justification by faith ; and that there was nothing in the Minutes which at all opposed that vital truth of Christianity. He complained of hostility to himself, even from persons who were under obligations to him, and from whom therefore he was entitled to a far different treatment. Mr. Shirley, in the most solemn manner, disclaimed all personal hostility, so far as he was concerned. He added, that his object simply was, to oppose the doctrine of the Minutes, which he believed to be of dangerous tendency ; that he had in his possession “numerous protests and testimonies against them, sent from Scotland, and from various parts of these kingdoms ; and that it must seem very extraordinary indeed, if so many men of sense and learning should be mistaken, and that there was nothing really offensive in the plain, natural import of the Minutes.” † He expressed his belief that Mr. Wesley and the Preachers “themselves (whatever meaning they might have intended) would allow that the *more obvious* meaning of the Minutes was reprehensible.” He therefore “recommended to them, nay, begged and entreated, for the Lord’s sake, that they would go as far as they could with a good conscience, in giving the world satisfaction.”

These are Mr. Shirley’s own statements ; and they are highly characteristic of the man : feeble, but withal sincere,

* Shirley’s Narrative, p. 13.

† Ibid.

devout, and well-intentioned. The Minutes were avowedly anti-Calvinistical, and therefore necessarily "offensive" to a large number of people in "Scotland, and in various parts of these kingdoms." Of this there could be no doubt. But then Mr. Wesley was no Calvinist, and never professed to be such; and if, in the frank avowal of his opinions, others who were differently minded took "offence," he was not to blame. His design was not to "offend" any one, but to discharge his own conscience. Mr. Shirley assumes that, because "many men of sense and learning" disapproved of the Minutes, they must be erroneous. Alas for the church, alas for the world, if nothing is ever to be said that "men of sense and learning" will not quarrel with!

This good man, in his address to the Conference, appears also to have been utterly unconscious that the course which he was pursuing was essentially unjust in this respect, that he did not view the Minutes in connexion with Mr. Wesley's other publications, and known sentiments; as if the Minutes contained the whole of his creed. Whereas they were the mere record of a conversation, the design of which was to guard from abuse the doctrine of justification by faith, which he and his Preachers held with as much tenaciousness and consistency as any other Ministers that ever lived, or that then existed.

Lady Huntingdon's biographer says, "Mr. Wesley drew up a declaration, which was acquiesced in by Mr. Shirley and his friends."* This statement, like many others put forth in the multifarious publication of that nameless author, is not true. The "declaration" was not "drawn up" by Mr. Wesley, as every one who is acquainted with his style will at once perceive. It wants the precision with which he was accustomed to express himself; and the conclusion of the last sentence is neither sense nor grammar. Mr. Shirley wrote it, and proposed it to the Conference, as a something which he desired to "give the world satisfaction." His own words are, "I said, I hoped they would not take offence (for I did not mean to give it) at my proposing to them a declaration which I had drawn up, wishing that something at least analogous to it might be agreed to. I then took the liberty

* Vol. ii., p. 242.

to read it; and Mr. Wesley, after he had made some (not very material) alterations in it, readily consented to sign it; in which he was followed by fifty-three of the Preachers in connexion with him; there being only one or two that were against it.” *

The following is the “Declaration” here referred to:—
 “Bristol, August 9th, 1772. Whereas the doctrinal points in the Minutes of a Conference, held in London, August 7th, 1770, have been understood to favour justification by works: now the Rev. John Wesley and others, assembled in Conference, do declare, that we had no such meaning; and we abhor the doctrine of justification by works, as a most perilous and abominable doctrine. And as the said Minutes are not sufficiently guarded, in the way they are expressed, we hereby solemnly declare, in the sight of God, that we have no trust or confidence but in the alone merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for justification or salvation, either in life, death, or the day of judgment. And though no one is a real Christian believer, (and consequently cannot be saved,) who doeth not good works, where there is time and opportunity, yet our works have no part in meriting or purchasing our justification from first to last, either in whole or in part.”

All the Preachers who were at the Conference appear to have affixed their names to this document, except Thomas Olivers, who spoke largely against it. There was nothing in the “declaration” contrary to those sound theological views which Mr. Olivers has expressed in his various publications; but he was deeply offended with the part which Mr. Shirley had previously acted; and he would not commit himself to the man who had written the scandalous Circular. According to Mr. Fletcher, Olivers regarded the affair of the “declaration” as “a patched-up peace;” and as such he would have nothing to do with it. Because he claimed the right of private judgment in this affair, Lady Huntingdon’s biographer honours him with the character of a “fiery-tempered, over-zealous man.”

When the Conference had complied with Mr. Shirley’s wishes, they put him into a position which he had not anticipated, and which, for a time, interrupted the joy of his

* Shirley’s Narrative.

success. "After the declaration had been agreed to," says he, "it was required of me, on my part, that I would make some public acknowledgment that I had mistaken the meaning of the Minutes. Here I hesitated a little; for though I was desirous to do everything (consistently with truth and a good conscience) for the establishment of peace and Christian fellowship; yet I was very unwilling to give anything under my hand that might seem to countenance the Minutes in their obvious sense. But then, when I was asked by one of the Preachers, whether I did not believe Mr. Wesley to be an honest man, I was distressed on the other hand, lest by refusing what was desired, I should seem to infer a doubt to Mr. Wesley's disadvantage. Having confidence therefore in Mr. Wesley's integrity, who had declared he had no such meaning in the Minutes as was favourable to justification by works; and considering that every man is the best judge of his own meaning, and has a right so far to our credit; and that, though nothing else could, yet the declaration did convince me they had some other meaning than what appeared: I say, these things considered, I promised them satisfaction in this particular, and a few days afterwards sent Mr. Wesley the following message, with which he was very well pleased:—

"'Mr. Shirley's Christian respects wait on Mr. Wesley. The declaration agreed to in Conference, August the 8th, 1771, has convinced Mr. Shirley he had mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the Minutes of the Conference held in London, August 7th, 1770; and he hereby wishes to testify the full satisfaction he has in the said declaration, and his hearty concurrence and agreement with the same.'"

Mr. Shirley says, with respect to his interview with the Conference, "The whole was conducted with great decency on all sides. We concluded with prayer, and with the warmest indications of peace and love. For my own part, I was perfectly sincere, and thought it one of the happiest and most honourable days of my life." *

When Mr. Fletcher received the Circular letter, inviting him to take part in the crusade against Mr. Wesley at the Bristol Conference, he was induced more carefully to examine the Minutes, against which the outcry was raised; and per-

* Narrative, p. 17.

ceiving their seasonableness and design, as well as their consistency with the general tenor of holy Scripture, he resolved to write in their defence, and that of their injured author. He completed his purpose in "Five Letters to the Hon. and Rev. Author of the Circular;" and transmitted the whole in manuscript to Mr. Wesley, that he might print or suppress them according to his judgment. Having carefully read them, and struck out a few passages which he thought contained censures too severe upon Mr. Shirley, Mr. Wesley resolved upon their publication. He therefore placed them in the hands of William Pine, his chief printer, directing that they should be conducted through the press, and sent forth into the world, with all convenient speed. The fulfilment of this charge was entrusted to Mr. Olivers, who was left in Bristol.

In the mean while intelligence was sent to Mr. Fletcher of Mr. Shirley's modest and friendly behaviour at the Conference, so different from the spirit of the Circular letter; and this induced him to resolve, if possible, to prevent the publication of his Letters in their present form. They were addressed to Mr. Shirley, and often in a strain of powerful and just rebuke; and he now wished, if it were not too late, to spare that gentleman's name and feelings. For this purpose he wrote with all haste to Mr. Ireland, requesting that the press might be stopped, and the pamphlet for the present withheld from the public. But though no copies had been put into circulation, the work was all printed, or nearly so, and notice had been given of its immediate sale. Mr. Ireland went to the printer with Mr. Fletcher's letter; but Pine acted according to the orders which he had previously received, and which in all probability Mr. Olivers urged him to follow. The "Five Letters" therefore quickly appeared, and were read with great eagerness; the popularity of the writer, the nature of the subject, and the excitement of the occasion, all giving a superior interest to the book.

The conduct of Mr. Wesley in putting to press his friend's vindication of the Minutes, and of Mr. Olivers and others in its publication, when the author wished to recall it, is severely censured by the biographer of Lady Huntingdon; but with singular unfairness and injustice. To make out a case of accusation against Mr. Wesley, it is assumed that the "declaration" which he and the Preachers signed was a

“recantation of the Minutes ;” and that they should be first recanted, and then defended, is described as a strange proceeding. But the sophism is too thin to deceive any person of ordinary discernment. Mr. Wesley never recanted the Minutes, and never intended to recant them ; nor did Mr. Shirley at the time understand the “declaration” in any such light. A sense was put upon the Minutes which Mr. Wesley never intended, and which was in direct opposition to the uniform tenor of his preaching and writings. *That sense* he always disavowed, and disavowed in the “declaration ;” but he never gave up the Minutes in their just and designed signification. He and the Preachers do not say in the “declaration,” “We retract our former principles ;” but, “*We had no such meaning,*” as that which was imputed to us. If they had retracted the Minutes, how could they call upon Mr. Shirley to confess himself in error in opposing them ? and how could Mr. Shirley say, as he does in his apology, that he had “*mistaken the meaning of the doctrinal points in the Minutes ?*” In his “Narrative” relating to the subject, which he wrote and published at the time, Mr. Shirley never speaks of the “declaration,” which Mr. Wesley and the Preachers had signed, as any retraction of their former principles ; nor could he do this without stultifying both himself and his apology. It is highly disingenuous in the writer of Lady Huntingdon’s Life to speak of it in this light, which he does again and again.* To Mr. Wesley, it is said, “must be attributed the guilt of letting loose the dogs of war. He commenced the dispute by publishing Mr. Fletcher’s defence of the Minutes, after having publicly drawn up and signed a *refutation* or *recantation* of the obnoxious principles which they contained.”† This language out-Herods Herod. A

* To make an impression upon the public mind injurious to Mr. Wesley, great prominence was given to this subject in the advertisement of Lady Huntingdon’s Life, which was said to contain, among other things of great importance, a document of intense interest, in which Mr. Wesley and his Preachers retracted their own doctrines. The trick was despicable. The document which was represented as such a curiosity had been before the world nearly seventy years ! It was published both by Mr. Wesley and Mr. Shirley ; and was well known to exist in Watson’s Life of Mr. Wesley, a work to which Lady Huntingdon’s biographer distinctly refers, and where he must have seen it.

† Lady Huntingdon’s Life and Times, vol. ii., p. 249.

“recantation” of the “principles contained” in the Minutes was neither “drawn up” nor “signed” by Mr. Wesley; and to “refute” them, in their legitimate and intended sense, was out of the power of any man. It would be to refute one half of the Bible, and take away the foundation of all practical religion.

The bold assumption that “the guilt” of commencing this controversy, if “guilt” there were, rested upon the head of Mr. Wesley, will never be conceded except by those partial judges who view the subject with only one eye. But perhaps the statement was put forth rather as an experiment upon the public credulity, than as a point which was cordially believed. In his leading theological principles Mr. Wesley preserved a strict consistency through the whole of his public life. He openly avowed and defended the doctrine of general redemption, the respectiveness of God’s decrees, and the consequent conditionality of the evangelical covenant; but while he claimed the right of private judgment himself, he acknowledged the same right in others, and therefore in no instance attempted to force the peculiarities of his creed upon any man. Never did he officiously interfere with the doctrinal sentiments of Lady Huntingdon and her people. When she occasionally asked him to preach in her chapels, if he was able, he complied with her wishes; but in no case did he abuse her confidence by advancing principles of which he knew she did not approve. Yet he had an undoubted right in his own chapels, and among his own people, freely to inculcate his views of divine truth, and to caution his Preachers on the subject of their doctrine. For doing this “the dogs of war were let loose” upon him, and urged to hunt him down, as an abettor of “dreadful heresy,” which was subversive of the “very fundamental principles of Christianity.” The huntsman’s horn was sounded by Lady Huntingdon and her kinsman; and by them the object which “the dogs” were to pursue, and the place where they were to assemble and begin the chase, were pointed out. Upon them, therefore, and not upon Mr. Wesley, the alleged “guilt” rested. All that he did in the case was to defend himself against the unjust imputations which were cast upon him: and this he was bound to do, if he would preserve the efficiency of the ministry which he had received, and for the

exercise of which he was accountable both to God and man. By what code of morals can it be proved to be a sin for a Minister of Christ, when unjustly assailed, to put forth an honest defence of his tenets and character? The endeavour to transfer the blame from the authors of a dishonourable conspiracy, to the victim whom they attempted to crush, after the notable failure of the scheme, is an instance of hardihood upon which few historians would venture.

With respect to the publication of Mr. Fletcher's pamphlet, when he himself wished to recall it, the statements of Lady Huntingdon's biographer are particularly unfair and misleading. He conceals an important fact, the knowledge of which is essential to a right understanding of the transaction. Mr. Fletcher's design was not to abandon the controversy into which he had felt it his duty to enter, but to carry it on in another form. He wished to spare the feelings of Mr. Shirley, but resolved to defend the Minutes. The intimation, therefore, that if Mr. Fletcher's wishes had been complied with, there would have been no controversy, is notoriously at variance with truth. In his letter to Mr. Ireland, recalling the manuscript, Mr. Fletcher expressly said, "that whether the Letters were suppressed or not, the Minutes *must be vindicated*; that Mr. Wesley owed it to the church, to the real Protestants, to all his societies, and to his own aspersed character; and that, after all, the controversy did not seem to him to be so much, whether the Minutes should stand, as whether the Antinomian Gospel of Dr. Crisp should prevail over the practical Gospel of Jesus Christ." * Why did Lady Huntingdon's biographer suppress this important declaration? It occurs in the letter to which he refers, and upon which he lays the stress of his argument in throwing the blame of the controversy upon Mr. Wesley.

On the appearance of the "Five Letters," in defence of the Minutes, and of their injured author, Mr. Shirley found himself in a situation which he little expected when he was engaged in writing the Circular, and in directing copies of it to religious people throughout the three kingdoms. In a sad and subdued tone he complained of the "bitterness" of the

* Preface to the Second Check to Antinomianism.

Letters. To him, indeed, they must have been gall and wormwood : not because the spirit of the writer was at all unkind, but because of the nature of the subjects upon which he dwelt. The Letters fix the true sense of the Minutes, (concerning which there never was any diversity of opinion among the men to whom they were addressed, and for whose guidance they were written,) by a reference to the general tenor of Mr. Wesley's writings, and well-known sentiments ; and prove that the propositions which they contain are in full accordance with the holy Scriptures. They describe, in a few but significant words, the labours and usefulness of Mr. Wesley, and administer a just rebuke to those who would force upon his words a meaning which he never intended, and strenuously disavowed ; and then attempt, through their own misrepresentations, to injure his reputation, and blast the fruit of his ministry. Unhappily for Mr. Shirley, he had some time before published a small volume of sermons, embodying principles far more legal than those which were contained in the Minutes ; and these Mr. Fletcher quoted, urging upon the writer the flagrant inconsistency and injustice of stigmatizing Mr. Wesley as a "heretic," while he himself was a still greater offender in the same way. All this was "bitter," because it was true. Never was reproof more justly merited than by the author of the Circular, or more effectively administered than by the Vicar of Madeley in the "Five Letters ;" the piety and kindness with which they were imbued rendering them increasingly cutting. The tender-hearted writer of the Letters was, however, distressed at what he had done, and compared himself to an unpractised Surgeon performing a dangerous operation upon a beloved friend. He grieved for Mr. Shirley, whom he had deeply wounded, and wrote to him a letter of apology and affection. But while he was ready to sink into despondency, he was encouraged by his friends, who assured him that he had done nothing more than the case called for and justified. One of the private letters which Mr. Fletcher received and published upon this occasion, there is reason to believe was written by Mr. Charles Wesley. It was dated from London, where Charles then resided ; and it contains the reproachful epithets which Lady Huntingdon had applied to Mr. John Wesley in the letter which she sent to Charles with the Circular. This

letter, which partakes of Charles's energy and decision, and of his brotherly affection and fidelity, was as follows :—

“I reverence Mr. Shirley for his candid acknowledgment of his hastiness in judging. I commend the Calvinists at the Conference, for their justice to Mr. Wesley, and their acquiescence in the declaration of the Preachers in connexion with him. But is that declaration, however dispersed, a remedy adequate to the evil done, not only to Mr. Wesley, but to the cause and work of God? Several Calvinists, in eagerness of malice, had dispersed their calumnies through the three kingdoms. A truly excellent person herself, in her mistaken zeal, had represented him as a ‘Papist unmasked,’ a ‘heretic,’ an ‘apostate.’ A Clergyman of the first reputation informs me, a poem on his apostasy is just coming out. Letters have been sent to every serious Churchman and Dissenter through the land, together with the Gospel Magazine. Great are the shoutings, ‘Now that he lieth, let him rise up no more!’ This is all the cry. His dearest friends and children are staggered, and scarce know what to think. You, in your corner, cannot conceive the mischief that has been done, and is still doing. But your Letters, in the hand of Providence, may answer the good ends you proposed by writing them. You have not been too severe to dear Mr. Shirley, moderate Calvinists themselves being judges, but very kind and friendly, to set a good, mistaken man right, and probably to preserve him from the like rashness as long as he lives. Be not troubled, therefore, but cast your care upon the Lord.” *

Mr. Shirley declined to answer the “Five Letters,” deeply as they implicated his character; but he drew up and published a “Narrative” of the proceedings in which he had been concerned: including the Circular; the Minutes, to which it referred; his letter to Mr. Wesley, with that of Lady Huntingdon, written just before the assembling of the Conference; an account of the interview of the deputation with that body; the declaration; his own acknowledgment that he had mistaken the import of the Minutes; with his own reflections upon the whole affair. Mr. Shirley also recanted his volume of sermons, from which Mr. Fletcher had made some quotations; declaring that he would not, in future, hold himself

* Preface to the Second Check to Antinomianism.

responsible for any doctrine that it contained. The spirit of this pamphlet is in general excellent. It is characterized by meekness, piety, and benevolence; and affords strong presumption, that had the Honourable and Reverend author been left to himself, he would never have acted the part which involved him in so much blame and trouble. It is painful to see the name of such a man, devout, naturally amiable and affectionate, affixed to the Circular. But the fierce and intolerant spirit of that document was not the spirit of Walter Shirley. It bore the impress of a far different mind.

Ten years before this period Mr. Shirley had come from Ireland to London, on occasion of the trial of his brother, the Earl Ferrers. It had then been his earnest desire, that on his arrival in London he might meet with one of the Wesleys: men whom, above all others, he deemed the most likely to sympathize with him, and administer comfort to his bleeding heart. Mr. John Wesley was engaged in his itinerant duties; but Charles was in London, and showed him kindness even surpassing that of a brother. He visited Mr. Shirley and his sister almost daily; and the Methodists of London, at Charles's instigation, prayed for the guilty Earl, and his unfortunate relations, at the sacramental table, as well as in their more public religious services; they held meetings of special prayer and fasting, in behalf of the same parties: it was therefore inexcusable in Mr. Shirley, now that his wounds were healed, to assail the brother of Charles Wesley, and the spiritual father of these praying people, and, without either proof or probability, in justification of the deed, brand him publicly as a heretic, and endeavour to engage both Churchmen and Dissenters to combine against him. The case of Mr. Shirley, while it calls for both censure and pity, is full of instruction and warning. It is an impressive comment upon the apostolic maxim, "Evil communications corrupt good manners."

Though the spirit of Mr. Shirley's "Narrative" was unexceptionable, the tract contained principles which Mr. Fletcher considered to be of dangerous tendency: he therefore wrote a reply to it, under the title of "A Second Check to Antinomianism;" in which he strengthens and confirms the reasonings of his former publication, and assures his opponent,

that the letter of apology which he had formerly sent to him, had no relation whatever to the doctrinal sentiments which he defended, but solely to the personal and polemic dress in which they were presented.

When the Conference was concluded, and Mr. Fletcher's vindication of the Minutes had appeared in print, Mr. Wesley addressed the following letter to Lady Huntingdon, who was the chief cause of all the clamour that had been recently raised against him. It shows how deeply he felt the injustice of her conduct.

“ My dear Lady,—When I received the former letter from your Ladyship, I did not know what to answer ; and I judged, not only that silence would be the best answer, but also that with which your Ladyship would be best pleased. When I received your Ladyship's of the second instant, I immediately saw that it required an answer ; only I waited till the hurry of the Conference was over, that I might do nothing rashly.

“ I know your Ladyship would not ‘ servilely deny the truth.’ I think, neither would I ; especially that great truth, justification by faith ; which Mr. Law indeed flatly denies, (and yet Mr. Law was a child of God,) but for which I have given up all my worldly hopes, my friends, my reputation ; yea, for which I have so often hazarded my life, and by the grace of God will do again. The principles established in the Minutes I apprehend to be no way contrary to this, or to that ‘ faith,’ that consistent plan of doctrine, which was ‘ once delivered to the saints.’ I believe, whoever calmly considers Mr. Fletcher's Letters will be convinced of this. I fear, therefore, ‘ zeal against those principles ’ is no less than zeal against the truth, and against the honour of our Lord. The preservation of his honour appears so sacred to me, and has done for above these forty years, that I have counted, and do count, all things loss in comparison of it. But till Mr. Fletcher's printed Letters are answered, I must think every thing spoken against those Minutes is totally destructive of His honour, and a palpable affront to Him, both as our Prophet and Priest, but especially as the King of his people. Those Letters, which therefore could not be suppressed without betraying the honour of our Lord, largely prove that the Minutes lay no other foundation than that which is laid in Scripture, and which I have been laying, and teaching others

to lay, for between thirty and forty years. Indeed it would be amazing that God should at this day prosper my labours as much, if not more than ever, by convincing as well as converting sinners, if I was 'establishing another foundation, repugnant to the whole plan of man's salvation under the covenant of grace, as well as the clear meaning of the established Church, and all other Protestant Churches.' This is a charge indeed ! but I plead, 'Not guilty ;' and till it is proved upon me, I must subscribe myself, my dear Lady,

"Your Ladyship's affectionate but much-injured servant."

Whether Lady Huntingdon sent any answer to this truly Christian epistle, does not appear ; but her biographer states, that she wrote to Mr. Shirley concerning it, saying, "that she could in no way explain Mr. Wesley's letter, except by attacking his integrity, or suspecting that his judgment was impaired."* This was indeed an expeditious method of getting out of a difficulty. Her Ladyship had charged Mr. Wesley with heresies, which not only placed him beyond the pale of all Protestant Churches, but of Christianity itself ; and when he remonstrates, and refers to direct proof of the contrary, she turns a deaf ear to his plea, and intimates that he is either a knave, or in his dotage ! Such was the justice awarded to a venerable servant of the Lord Jesus, and that by one of the gentler sex, when he presumed to warn his fellow-labourers against what he conceived to be speculative Antinomianism !

Whether Mr. Wesley's understanding was decayed or not, Mr. Shirley felt that the mind of the Vicar of Madeley was too acute and powerful for him, and therefore retired from the controversy which he had been the first to provoke. On his retirement Mr. Richard Hill came forward as the opponent of Mr. Fletcher, and of the doctrines contained in Mr. Wesley's Minutes. He was a gentleman of family and fortune in Shropshire, and had already gained some celebrity by the publication of two bulky pamphlets, entitled, "*Pietas Oxoniensis*," and "Goliath Slain," concerning the expulsion of six students from the University of Oxford, for the alleged crimes of praying and expounding the Scriptures. Mr. Hill had given proofs of decided piety, was a thorough Calvinist,

* Life of Lady Huntingdon, vol. ii., p. 244.

and not destitute of ability ; but he had neither the learning, the temper, nor the biblical and theological knowledge, which were requisite in a writer on the quinquarticular controversy. He entered the field with ample confidence, and without the least apparent apprehension that he might by possibility be unsuccessful. Such, however, was the event. Mr. Fletcher refuted his arguments, and, by the mere force of reason, extorted from him a confession in favour of some of the very propositions which he had pledged himself to disprove. In the course of this controversy Mr. Hill was raised to the rank of a Baronet ; but this neither supplied him with new arguments, nor improved his temper.

When Mr. Fletcher had published four of his "Checks to Antinomianism," Sir Richard addressed to him a private letter, proposing to discontinue the controversy, and immediately to suppress all that he had ever written respecting the Minutes, if Mr. Fletcher would do the same. To this he could not accede. He had taken up his pen, not for personal victory, but the establishment of truth ; not for party objects, but to check the doctrinal and practical Antinomianism which was gaining ground : he could not therefore betray the cause of righteousness which he had espoused, for the sake of a hollow peace. While he cherished the utmost respect for his opponent, he deemed it his duty to persevere in his career of authorship. The Baronet's letter was left among the manuscripts of Mr. Charles Wesley. Hence the probability, that his advice was solicited by his friend, the Vicar of Madeley, at this stage of the controversy. What that advice was, may be easily conjectured, considering Charles's strong views concerning the questions at issue. When Sir Richard's offer was declined, he sent Mr. Fletcher an angry letter, and soon after published another tract ; to which Mr. Fletcher replied with his wonted piety and logical skill, in a "Fifth Check to Antinomianism." Sir Richard then lost all patience, and, without asking even for an armistice, sounded a retreat. The fact is, he was fairly worsted ; to save appearances, he accused his opponent of " execrable Swiss slander ;" declined all further discussion with him ; and assigned as the reason, the badness of Mr. Fletcher's spirit, and his unfair mode of argumentation. Whatever works Mr. Fletcher might publish in future, the Baronet

declared that he would never read one of them. If Mr. Fletcher's spirit was bad, and his mode of reasoning illogical, Sir Richard had nothing to do, but calmly expose them both, and then his triumph would have been complete; but the truth is, he felt that he could not answer Mr. Fletcher's arguments, either to his own satisfaction, or that of other people; and therefore the sooner he was out of the field the better.

The Rev. Rowland Hill, then a young man of greater zeal than discretion, took up the cause of his brother; but his reasonings, which were not remarkable for their cogency, derived no force from the manner in which they were proposed. To civility and gentleness he made no pretensions, though he seemed to expect these qualities in others. Mr. Fletcher's answer to him was as decisive as that with which the Baronet refused to grapple; and the reproof which he received for his very unscrupulous language was mild, but just and powerful.

The witty Vicar of Everton, the Rev. John Berridge, was not content to be a silent spectator of this contest, and therefore published his "Christian World unmasked," in opposition to the tenets of his friends Mr. Wesley and Fletcher. This publication presented a striking exhibition of the writer's peculiar habits of thought: queer, ludicrous, grotesque. He undertook to split hairs with a witness; for he set up a distinction between "a Jewish if," and "a Christian if;" maintaining that the "if" with which Christians are concerned is of a negative character. It "does not belong to the circumcised race," and "wears no dripping beard." His reasonings against "sincere obedience" were not quite so harmless as his disquisitions respecting what he called "the valiant sergeant If." The wit which the Vicar of Madeley possessed was as keen and brilliant as that of the Vicar of Everton, and in this case far more effective. Mr. Berridge's attack upon the principles of practical religion was completely neutralized; and he is said to have acknowledged his defeat in language humiliating to himself, but significant, and such as cannot be repeated. As a Minister, Mr. Berridge was very laborious and self-denying, and for some time he was eminently useful. He adopted an habitual jocularity of manner in speaking and writing on sacred subjects, which was strikingly opposed to

the example and spirit of the sacred writers, though in full accordance with the irreverence and vulgarity of Antinomianism. He published a hymn-book, containing several of Mr. Charles Wesley's beautiful compositions, which he afterwards suppressed, because of the Wesleyan character of its theology, and substituted for it a volume of his own composing, in which is some of the most arrant doggerel the world has ever seen, scarcely a whit superior to the rude trash which was put forth by William Darney.*

The Rev. Augustus Toplady came in the rear of Mr. Fletcher's opponents, and was decidedly the ablest man among them. He was a person of reading and research; and his style was clear and vigorous. Yet there is far more rhetoric than close argumentation in his writings: and he could bear no man's contradiction on the subject of Calvin's peculiarities. To him an advocate of general redemption, and of conditional decrees, seemed scarcely less hateful than a fiend. Mr. Fletcher analyzed the "Scheme of Christian and Philosophical Necessity" which this unbending advocate of absolute predestination sent forth into the world, and proved it to be equally at variance with sound philosophy and Scripture truth. Mr. Sellon ably answered the alleged "Proof"

* The following is an extract from Mr. Berridge's preface to his poetic effusions:—"Many volumes of hymns have been lately published; some of them a new composition, others ■ mere collection; and it may seem needless to add one more to the number, especially after having published ■ collection myself. But ill health, some years past, having kept me from travelling or preaching, I took up the trade of hymn-making: a handicraft much followed of late, but a business I was not born or bred to, and undertaken chiefly to keep a long sickness from preying on my spirit, and to make tedious nights pass over more smoothly. Some tinkling employment was wanting, which might amuse and not fatigue me.

"Beside, I was not wholly satisfied with the collection I had published. The bells indeed had been chiefly cast in a celebrated Foundry; and in ringing were tunable enough; none more so; but a clear Gospel tone was not found in them all. Human wisdom and strength, perfection and merit, give Sion's bells a Levitical twang, and drown the mellow tone of the Gospel outright."—Berridge's *Sion's Songs or Hymns*, 1785.

The facetious author here indulges himself in a little harmless but unworthy misrepresentation. In the hymns which were published by the Wesleys there is not a line in favour of "*human* wisdom and strength, perfection and merit." All "wisdom, strength, and perfection," they ascribed to the grace of God; and to "merit," in the strict and proper sense of that term, they were as decidedly opposed as was the Vicar of Everton or any of his brethren. He could cast a slur upon the creed of the Wesleys, but he could not refute it.

of the Calvinism of the Church of England, which Mr. Toplady published.

In this controversy Messrs. Fletcher and Wesley had more opponents than publicly appeared. The Rev. Martin Madan, of the Lock Hospital, did not take an open and prominent part against them; but he is mentioned in Mr. Fletcher's private correspondence, as having circulated a manuscript answer to the Minutes, as revising the angry pamphlets of Mr. Rowland Hill, and encouraging him in his anti-Wesleyan authorship. Mr. Madan, who was educated for the Bar, possessed considerable powers of mimicry. He accompanied some of his jovial companions to hear Mr. John Wesley, that, on their return, he might divert them by acting the Methodist Preacher. The word which he heard laid hold upon his conscience; so that when they called upon him, after the service, to "take off John Wesley," he significantly answered, "John Wesley has taken me off;" and declined to act the buffoon, at the expense of that man of God. He obtained episcopal ordination, became a popular Preacher of the truth, and for some years was a cordial friend of the Wesleys. Afterwards he embraced the Calvinian theory, and turned his hand and tongue against the man whom God had employed as the instrument of his salvation. His unkind treatment of Mr. Wesley was the beginning of that downward course, which ultimately led to the irretrievable loss of his own reputation and usefulness.

Three of Mr. Fletcher's opponents, the brothers Hill and Mr. Toplady, were far from confining their attention to theological questions. One object which they were mainly anxious to accomplish, and to which their ceaseless efforts were pertinaciously directed, was the annihilation of Mr. Wesley's influence, by the ruin of his character. Sir Richard assailed Mr. Wesley's intellectual reputation, and laboured to prove him a mere fool, without any fixed principles of divinity, and therefore incessantly contradicting himself. In his endeavour to attain this object, he manifested a zeal and perseverance which were worthy of a better cause. He collected ridiculous and absurd stories concerning Mr. Wesley, without any very scrupulous anxiety whether they were true or false, and placed them upon public record, as entitled to universal credit. Mr. Wesley had published several volumes and tracts,

of his own composition. He had also abridged a large number of works, written by different authors, and published them in fifty volumes, under the name of "A Christian Library." Some of these he had abridged in travelling, so that his erasures were not always distinct. The consequence was, that the printer had occasionally inserted passages which were intended to be omitted. Mr. Charles Wesley had also published several volumes and tracts in verse, some of which John had never seen till they appeared in print: and of a part of these he had publicly expressed his disapprobation. All these works Sir Richard Hill collected; and assuming that Mr. John Wesley was answerable for every expression with which his name was connected, and for every verse that his brother Charles had written, the Baronet selected from the whole of these publications sentences, half-sentences, and quarter-sentences, in which there appeared any discrepancy, and arranged them in parallel columns, as Mr. John Wesley's contradictions of himself. The inference to be drawn from the whole was, his incompetency to teach, and consequent unworthiness of the public confidence.

Nothing could be more disingenuous and unfair than such a mode of criticism. A man may surely abridge and recommend a book, as being on the whole edifying and instructive, without making himself responsible for the absolute correctness of every word and sentence which it contains; and to make a man answerable for what he had never seen, but in print, as was the case with a part of Mr. Charles Wesley's poetry, was the perfection of injustice. Had the Baronet tried his skill upon the Bible, on the same principle that he adopted with respect to Mr. Wesley's writings, he would have found ample scope for his perverted ingenuity, and have been shocked at his own impiety and success. It would be an easy task to convict divine inspiration itself of contradiction, by breaking off words and parts of sentences from their proper connexion, and placing them in juxta-position with each other.

Mr. Wesley examined all the examples of contradiction which Sir Richard had charged upon him; and confessed that in one instance, and one only, with all his labour and pains, the Baronet had succeeded. It occurred in a note on the New Testament, which he promised to correct, whenever

the book should be reprinted. Upon the publication of Sir Richard's idle tales, and his elaborate attempts to convict Mr. Wesley of contradiction, his brother Charles wrote the following spirited epigram :—

Why do the zealots of Geneva rage,
And fiercest war with an old Prophet wage?
Why doth their chief with blackest slanders load
An hoary servant of the living God?
Sincerely hate, *affectedly* condemn?
“Because he contradicts himself—not them!”
Let Wesley then a different method try,
Himself gainsay, his own report deny;
Evade or contradict the general call,
And teach, “The Saviour did *not* die for all.”
This contradiction openly confest
Would cancel and atone for all the rest!

Mr. Toplady and Mr. Rowland Hill attacked Mr. Wesley's good name with a deeper feeling than that of Sir Richard, and in a somewhat different manner. He assailed Mr. Wesley's intellect; they his moral character. He represented Mr. Wesley as a fit object of laughter and contempt: they spoke of him as an object of abhorrence and detestation; as a man that was corrupt in mind and heart. They acknowledged in him no virtue, and no excellence whatever; nothing that entitled him to either esteem or love, or that even called for pity; but treated him with less respect than, under ordinary circumstances, they would have treated a convicted felon. Nor does it appear that either of them, to the last moment of his life, manifested the least relenting towards this venerable man. If Mr. Wesley as a religious teacher was of the slightest benefit to any human being, and was not covered with universal execration, it was not because of any forbearance towards him on the part of the Rev. Rowland Hill and Augustus Toplady.

The fact is, they “ploughed with his heifer.” His jealous wife was their oracle; and while she was attempting to persuade all who would listen to her, that her husband was a bad man, Mr. Hill held her up to the public confidence, as a person whose testimony was entitled to implicit credit. Whether she was always of a sound mind may be justly questioned. Repeatedly was she detected in the utterance of

deliberate untruths, of her own invention, and in the distribution of forged and interpolated documents, against her husband. Yet she found a patron in Mr. Hill. In one of the bitterest pamphlets that ever emanated from the press, he says, "I fear, by Mr. John's conduct, that he has been a stranger to true religion all his life-time: and while he behaves as he does to *the wife of his bosom*, with whom I have the honour of a personal acquaintance, I cannot be persuaded to alter my opinion." * When Mr. Toplady was on his death-bed, and, as he expresses it, was "every day in view of dissolution," he wrote for the press what he calls his "Dying Avowal;" and in this document he says, with respect to Mr. Wesley, "I most sincerely hope, my last hours will be much better employed than in conversing with *such* a man." † Mr. Wesley, in one of his letters of expostulation addressed to his wife, complains that she submitted his private papers to the inspection of these gentlemen, who were so notoriously hostile to his character. What use they made of these the day of judgment will declare. But neither they, nor the unhappy woman whom they encouraged, ever

* *Imposture Detected*, p. 22. 1777.

† Page 4. 1778. The reason of Mr. Toplady's "Dying Avowal" was this: During the illness which preceded his decease, a report was circulated, that he had requested an interview with Mr. Wesley, and expressed regret for some things that he had written against him. This report was carried to the dying man, who was indignant that any one should suppose he would make a concession to John Wesley. At his own request, therefore, Mr. Toplady was carried to his chapel, where he declared his unvarying attachment to the principles which he had long held, and protested that he had nothing to retract with regard to the Arminian leader, against whom he had so freely written. He was thence carried back to his death-bed, where he wrote the substance of his address, and ordered it to be immediately printed in a small tract.

With whom the report had its origin, it is impossible to say. Probably some good man, less hardy in his spirit than Mr. Toplady, suggested that a reconciliation with the man whom he had so bitterly traduced would be at once Christian and desirable, before he went hence to be no more seen; and another, hearing the remark, might innocently mistake it for a statement of fact. Mr. Toplady, whose ruling passion was strong in death, attributed the report to "the perfect liars:" that is, to Christians who believed it to be their duty and privilege to love their God and Saviour with all their heart, and soul, and mind, and strength, and their neighbour as themselves. Such persons, being connected with John Wesley, the dying man assumed to be addicted to the utterance of wilful and deliberate falsehood. Such was the spirit of this sturdy polemic, unsoftened even by the immediate prospect of death.

produced the smallest vestige of proof that their injurious allegations were founded in fact.

It is only justice to the leading persons among the Predestinarians of those times to say, that they did not believe the slanderous reports against Mr. Wesley, which his wife propagated, and to which Mr. Hill especially made himself a party. Mr. Whitefield, who was intimately acquainted with Mr. Wesley, and who well knew all that his wife had to say against him, did not believe them: and hence his declaration in his will, which was made only a few months before his lamented death: "I leave a mourning ring to my honoured and dear friends and disinterested fellow-labourers, the Rev. Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, in token of my indissoluble union with them, in heart and Christian affection, notwithstanding our difference in judgment about some particular points of doctrine."

Lady Huntingdon, with all her warmth of opposition to Mr. Wesley's creed, did not believe the aspersions which were cast upon his moral character. Had she done so, she would not have wept at the remembrance of the separation which had taken place between them. Dr. Thomas Haweis, who was her Ladyship's Chaplain, and a strict Predestinarian, after Mr. Wesley's death publicly avowed the friendship which had subsisted between himself and that great man, and entered his caveat against the reports which had been industriously propagated to his disadvantage; at the same time declaring his dissent from Mr. Wesley's anti-Calvinistical views. "I hope never," says he, "to be ashamed of the friendship of John Wesley." "I need not speak of the exemplariness of his life. Too many eyes were upon him to admit of his halting: nor could his weight have been maintained a moment longer than the fullest conviction impressed his people, that he was an eminently favoured saint of God, and as distinguished for his holy walk, as for his vast abilities, indefatigable labour, and singular usefulness." *

Mr. Charles Wesley was no indifferent spectator, when so many reckless and unprovoked attacks were made upon his brother's good-name and usefulness. In the year 1776, two masked assassins, who assumed the not-inappropriate names

* History of the Church, vol. iii., pp. 274, 275.

of SCORPION and SNAP-DRAGON, assailed him in a London newspaper, regardless of truth and decency. They professed to ground their charges against him upon his private papers, which his wife had placed in their hands. Their insinuations were wicked and cruel, and advanced in a spirit of deep malignity; but not even a shadow of proof could they adduce to the disadvantage of the man whose character and ministry they attempted to destroy. While this persecution against his brother was in progress, Mr. Charles Wesley addressed the following epigrammatic lines “to a friend,” concerning what he justly calls these “infamous publications :”—

You ask the cause of all this pother,
And brother stigmatized by brother :
Why all these floods of scandal shed
With curses on a hoary head.
'Tis but the malice of a party,
As blind and impotent as hearty,
A Popish and Geneva trick,
“ Throw dirt enough, and some will stick,
Will choke the reprobate Arminian,
And damn him in the world's opinion.”

They blacken, not because he tries
To blind, but open, people's eyes ;
They blacken, to cut short dispute,
With lies and forgeries confute,
And thus triumphantly suppress
The calm debate,* and calm address ; †
At once decide the controversy,
And boast, “ He lies at Calvin's mercy ! ”
Mercy perhaps they might have shown
The nation's old *deceiver* John ;
But patriots-elect will never
Forgive the nation's *undeceiver*.

The meekness and equanimity with which Mr. John Wesley met these heartless attacks upon his reputation may be seen from the subjoined statement, which was made by Miss Sarah Wesley, the intelligent daughter of his brother. The persecuted man well knew that he was thus assailed, not because of any moral delinquencies of which he was guilty, but because he could not receive the peculiarities of the

* Predestination Calmly Considered.

† Calm Address to the Americans.

Genevan theology. "I think it was in the year 1775," says this lady, "my uncle promised to take me with him to Canterbury and Dover. About this time Mrs. Wesley had obtained some letters which she used to the most injurious purposes, misinterpreting spiritual expressions, and interpolating words. These she read to some Calvinists, and they were to be sent to the Morning Post. A Calvinist gentleman, who esteemed my father and uncle, came to the former, and told him that, for the sake of religion, the publication should be stopped, and Mr. John Wesley be allowed to answer for himself. As Mrs. Wesley had read, but did not show, the letters to him, he had some doubts of their authenticity; and though they were addressed to Mr. John Wesley, they might be forgeries: at any rate, he ought not to leave town at such a juncture, but clear the matter satisfactorily.

"My dear father, to whom the reputation of my uncle was far dearer than his own, immediately saw the importance of refutation, and set off to the Foundery, to induce him to postpone his journey; while I, in my own mind, was lamenting such a disappointment, having anticipated it with all the impatience natural to my years. Never shall I forget the manner in which my father accosted my mother, on his return home. 'My brother,' said he, 'is indeed an extraordinary man. I placed before him the importance of the character of a Minister; the evil consequences which might result from his indifference to it; the cause of religion; stumbling-blocks cast in the way of the weak; and urged him, by every relative and public motive, to answer for himself, and stop the publication. His reply was, *Brother, when I devoted to God my ease, my time, my life, did I except my reputation? No. Tell Sally I will take her to Canterbury to-morrow.*'

"I ought to add, that the letters in question were satisfactorily proved to be mutilated, and no scandal resulted from his trust in God." *

Mr. Thomas Olivers, who took a somewhat prominent part in this controversy, was treated with especial contumely by Sir Richard Hill. He is also honoured with a due share of censure in Lady Huntingdon's Life, where many persons who

* Watson's Life of Mr. Wesley, pp. 203, 204. 8vo. edit.

were far less entitled to commendation are highly extolled. Thomas Olivers was an eminent example of the grace of God, and acquired a character of which neither he nor his friends had any reason to be ashamed. In early life he was left an orphan; and having no adequate religious or moral training, he acquired a fearful hardihood in sin. He learned the business of a shoemaker, and after the expiration of his apprenticeship travelled extensively in the country, getting work where he could, contracting debts, and pleased with his own cleverness in cheating unsuspecting tradespeople.

He was at length convinced of sin, and brought to repentance, by God's blessing upon a sermon which he heard Mr. Whitefield preach in the open air; after which he joined the Methodist society, and gave proof by his conduct that he was a new creature. Recollecting that he was entitled to some property under his father's will, he claimed it, bought a horse, visited every place where he had contracted any debt, paid every farthing that he owed, with interest when the parties would receive it, and asked pardon of all the people whom he had wronged. After due trial, Mr. Wesley appointed him to a Circuit as a Travelling Preacher; and when he had for many years laboured faithfully in that office, and improved his mind by diligent study and reading, he was fixed in London, and entrusted with the correction of Mr. Wesley's publications as they passed through the press. Mr. Wesley was his best earthly friend; and he returned the kindness which he received with true filial esteem and love. He wrote many tracts in defence of his father and friend against the libellous publications of the Messrs. Hill and Toplady, which are creditable to his talents, and display a grateful affection which every generous heart cannot but admire. The vindication of Mr. Wesley was a crime which Sir Richard Hill could never forgive; and hence he lavished upon this humble Methodist Preacher the most contemptuous nicknames, which ill became a Baronet, a graduate of the University of Oxford, a Member of Parliament, and, above all, a professor of spiritual religion. He never answered the arguments of Thomas Olivers, but contented himself by speaking of this opponent as an impertinent quadruped, altogether beneath his notice, and whose barking he would not even

order his footman to silence by the lashes of his whip ! Notwithstanding all these airs of superiority,

“Worth makes the man, and want of it the fellow ;
The rest is all but leather and prunella.”

The Baronet has long been reduced by death to a level with Thomas Olivers ; and this gentleman, with all his advantages of birth, title, and education, has left no such monuments of genius as the man whom he affected to regard with contempt, but really feared. To say nothing of Olivers’s prose publications, one of the noblest hymns in existence, the hymn to “the God of Abraham,” was his composition. It will doubtless be sung by spiritual worshippers, of every denomination, with delight and profit, as long as the English language is understood. The fine melody entitled “Helmsley,” and adapted to the hymn,

“Lo ! He comes, with clouds descending,”

was composed by him, with other specimens of sacred verse and sacred music, which have been greatly admired by competent judges. “This author was,” says Mr. Fletcher, “twenty-five years ago, a mechanic, and, like ‘one’ Peter, ‘alias’ Simon the fisherman, and like ‘one’ Saul, ‘alias’ Paul a tent-maker, has had the honour of being promoted to the dignity of a Preacher of the Gospel ; and his talents as a writer, a logician, a poet, and a composer of sacred music, are known to those who have looked into his publications.”

When Mr. Fletcher was left by his opponents in full possession of the field, he still persevered in his unwearied literary labours, guarding on the one hand the doctrine of salvation by grace, and on the other hand that of practical holiness. No man ever wrote on the five points with equal copiousness, judgment, and piety. His style and manner are his own ; so is his mode of argumentation ; and both are beautiful in their originality. That a foreigner should be able to write English with such correctness, fluency, and idiomatic propriety, is truly surprising. But he was a man of singular quickness and vivacity of thought. The benevolence of his heart, arising from his deep piety, is strikingly apparent in all his writings. It is common for disputants and students to read controversial authors ; but Mr.

Fletcher's is the rare case of a polemic, whose works are resorted to and delighted in by the most devout and spiritually minded, who study them for the improvement of their piety, and as a means of strengthening every heavenly affection. Various attempts have of late been made to lower his reputation, and to persuade the world that in point of temper he was in no degree superior to the men with whom he had to contend. But the absurdity of the assumption is too glaring to obtain credit with any one who has read his writings and theirs. It is not denied that Mr. Fletcher's works have given pain, exquisite pain, to persons of unquestionable piety. But it does not follow that a book has been written in a bad spirit because it produces this effect. Piety is sometimes found in connexion with undue attachment to erroneous opinions. What is called "bitterness" in Mr. Fletcher is the bitterness of unwelcome doctrine, set forth with all the advantages of language, confidence, and argument. He himself confessed that in opposing what he conceived to be error, he had in some instances used stronger terms than the occasion required; but no person has ever been able to find in the writings of this holy man a single outbreak of personal malignity, trying as were the circumstances in which he was often placed.

The biographer of Lady Huntingdon has given a very short passage from a private letter, apparently to prove that Mr. Fletcher deeply repented of having engaged in this controversy.* General readers would have been better able to form a judgment on this subject, if the whole of the letter had been given. It is well known that Mr. Fletcher regretted the personal character which the controversy assumed at the beginning; but that he had no doubt respecting the doctrines which he defended, and of his duty to write in their defence, is manifest from the fact, that, after the letter in question was written, he persevered for several years in his controversial career; and on closing his argumentation with Sir Richard Hill, he makes the following remarkable declaration:—

"In one of the three letters which introduce the fictitious Creed, Mr. Hill says, 'Controversy, I am persuaded, has not

* Vol. ii., p. 245.

done me any good ;' and he exhorts me to examine closely whether I cannot make the same confession. I own that it would have done me harm, if I had blindly contended for my opinions. Nay, if I had shut my eyes against the light of truth ; if I had set the plainest scriptures aside, as if they were not worth my notice ; if I had overlooked the strongest arguments of my opponents ; if I had advanced groundless charges against them ; if I had refused to do justice to their good meaning or piety ; and, above all, if I had taken my leave of them by injuring their moral character, by publishing over and over again arguments which they have properly answered, without taking the least notice of their answers ; if I had made a solemn promise not to read one of their books, though they should publish a thousand volumes ; if, continuing to write against them, I had fixed upon them (as 'unavoidable' consequences) absurd tenets, which have no more necessary connexion with their principles, than the doctrine of general redemption has with Calvinian reprobation ; if I had done this, I say, controversy would have wounded my conscience or my reason ; and, without adding anything to my light, it would have immovably fixed me in my prejudices, and perhaps branded me before the world for an Arminian bigot. But as matters are, I hope I may make the following acknowledgment without betraying the impertinence of proud boasting.

“Although I have often been sorry that controversy should take up so much of the time which I might with much more satisfaction to myself have employed in devotional exercises ; and although I have lamented, and do still lament, my low attainments in the meekness of wisdom, which should constantly guide the pen of every controversial writer ; yet I rejoice that I have been enabled to persist in my resolution either to wipe off, or to share, the reproach of those who have hazarded their reputation in defence of pure and undefiled religion. And if I am not mistaken, my repeated attempts have been attended with these happy effects. In vindicating the moral doctrines of grace, I hope that, as a man, I have learned to think more closely, and to investigate truth more ardently, than I did before. There are rational powers in the dullest souls, which lie hid as sparks in a flint. Controversial opposition and exertion, like the stroke of the steel, have

made me accidentally find out some of the latent sparks of reason, for which I should never have thanked my Maker if I had never discovered them. I have frequently been thankful to find that my horse could travel in bad roads better than I expected; nor do I think that it is a piece of Pharisaism to say, I am thankful to find that my mind can travel with more ease than I thought it could through theological roads, rendered almost impassable by heaps of doctrinal rubbish, brought from all parts of Christendom, and by briers of contention which have kept growing for above a thousand years.

“To return : as a Divine, I see more clearly the gaps and stiles at which mistaken good men have turned out of the narrow way of truth, to the right hand and to the left. As a Protestant, I hope I have much more esteem for the Scripture in general, and in particular for those practical parts of it which the Calvinists had insensibly taught me to overlook or despise. And this increasing esteem is, I trust, accompanied with a deeper conviction of the truth of Christianity, and with a greater readiness to defend the Gospel against infidels, Pharisees, and Antinomians. As a Preacher, I hope I can now do more justice to a text, by reconciling it with contrary scriptures. As an anti-Calvinist, I have learned to do the Calvinists justice in granting that there is an election of distinguishing grace for God’s peculiar people, and a particular redemption for all believers who are faithful unto death. And by that means, as a controvertist, I can more easily excuse pious Calvinists, who, through prejudice, mistake that scriptural election for their Antinomian election, and who consider that particular redemption as the only redemption mentioned in the Scriptures. Nay, I can, without scruple, allow Mr. Hill, that his doctrines of ‘finished salvation’ and irresistible grace are true with respect to all those who die in their infancy. As one who is called an Arminian, I have found out some flaws in Arminianism, and evidenced my impartiality by pointing them out, as well as the flaws of Calvinism. As a witness for the truth of the Gospel, I hope I have learned to bear reproach from all sorts of people with more undaunted courage. And I humbly trust, that were I called to seal the truth of the doctrines of grace and justice, against the Pharisees and the Antinomians, I could, divine

grace supporting me to the last, do it more rationally, and, of consequence, with greater steadiness.

“ Again : as a follower of Christ, I hope I have learned to disregard my dearest friends for my heavenly Prophet ; or, to speak the language of our Lord, I hope I have learned to forsake father, mother, and brothers, for Christ’s sake, and the Gospel’s. As a disputant, I have learned that solid arguments and plain scriptures make no more impression upon bigotry, than the charmer’s voice does upon the deaf adder ; and by that means, I hope I depend less upon the powers of reason, the letter of the Scripture, and the candour of professors, than I formerly did. As a believer, I have been brought to see and feel that the power of the Spirit of truth, which teaches men to be of one heart and of one mind, and makes them think and speak the same, is at a very low ebb in the religious world ; and that the prayer which I ought continually to offer is, ‘ O Lord, baptize Christians with the Spirit of truth, and the fire of love. Thy kingdom come ! Bring thy church out of the wilderness of error and sin, into the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ As a member of the Church of England, I have learned to be pleased with our holy mother, for giving us floods of pure morality to wash away the few remaining Calvinian freckles that remain upon her face. As a Christian, I hope I have learned, in some degree, to exercise that charity which teaches us boldly to oppose a dangerous error, without ceasing to honour and love its abettors, so far as they resemble our Lord ; and enables us to use an irony, with St. Paul and Jesus Christ, not as an enemy uses a dagger, but as a Surgeon uses a lancet or a caustic. And, lastly, as a writer, I have learned to feel the truth of Solomon’s observation : ‘ Of making many books there is no end ; and much study is a weariness to the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter : Fear God, and keep his commandments ; for this is the whole duty of man,’ and the sum of the anti-solifidian truth which I endeavour to vindicate.

“ I do not say that I have learned any of these lessons as I should have done ; but I hope I have learned so much of them as to say, that in these respects my controversial toil has not been altogether in vain in the Lord. And now, reader, let me entreat thee to pray, that if I am spared to

vindicate more fully what appears to us the scriptural doctrine of grace, I may be so helped by the Father of lights and the God of love, as to speak the pure truth in perfect love, and never more drop a needlessly-severe expression. Some such have escaped me before I was aware. In endeavouring to render my style nervous, I have sometimes inadvertently rendered it provoking. Instead of saying that the doctrines of grace, so called, represent God as ‘absolutely graceless’ towards myriads of ‘reprobated culprits,’ I would now say, that, upon the principles of my opponents, God appears ‘devoid of grace’ towards those whom He has absolutely ‘reprobated’ from all eternity. The thought is the same, I grant, but the expressions are less grating, and more decent. This propriety of language I labour after, as well as after more meekness of wisdom. The Lord help me and my antagonists to keep our garments clean! Controvertists ought to be clothed with an ardent, flaming love for truth, and a candid, humble regard for their neighbour. May no root of prejudice stain that flaming love! no bigotry spot that candid regard! no malice rend our seamless garments! and if they are ever rolled in blood, may it be only in the blood of our common enemies,—destructive error, and the man of sin!”*

Such was the language of Mr. Fletcher when he had been some years engaged in this arduous conflict, and had ample opportunities for judging of its effects upon his own mind, as well as upon the minds of others. It is certainly not the language of penitence, that he had become a disputant, but rather of humble gratitude, that while he had successfully defended what he believed to be revealed truth, his own personal piety was increased.

The writer of *Lady Huntingdon’s Life and Times* says, “The effect of the controversy was most pernicious. Without eliciting truth, or illustrating difficult texts, the combatants inflamed the spirit of party, and rendered the two bodies of Methodists, for several years, more hostile to each other than almost any other differing sects. Both parties were driven to extremes.”† This anonymous writer may be

* Fictitious and genuine Creed.

† Vol. ii., p. 250. Various attempts have been made within the last few years to produce an impression unfavourable to Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher, as having dishonoured themselves in this controversy by unchristian feeling and intemperate

allowed to speak for his own party; but when he includes Mr. Fletcher in these sweeping censures, he enunciates his

language. The Messrs. Hill and Toplady, it is confessed, did not uniformly manifest the meekness of wisdom; but it is intimated that their opponents, if not equally guilty, were criminal in a very high degree. The proof which has of late been adduced in support of this assumption is curious, and cannot by possibility be satisfactory to the writers who have employed it. When Mr. Rowland Hill applied to Mr. Wesley the most reproachful epithets, his own friends complained of his acrimony; and he, in vindication of himself, contended that Mr. John and Charles Wesley had used similar language. The following are the examples which he produced:—"Devil's factors—Satan's synagogue—Children of the old roaring, hellish murderer, who believe his lie—Advocates of sin—Witnesses for the father of lies—Blasphemers—Satan-sent Preachers—Devils—Liars—Fiends." "These terms," says Mr. Hill, "are taken out of different poems, composed by those gentlemen; all of which, if I greatly mistake not, are still upon sale."—Full Answer to the Rev. J. Wesley's Remarks, p. 30.

The author of the "Life and Times of the Countess of Huntingdon," (vol. ii., p. 247,) the Rev. Edwin Sidney, in his Life of the Rev. Rowland Hill, (p. 108,) and Mr. Jones, in his Memoir of Mr. Hill, (p. 555,) have all urged this quotation from Mr. Hill's pamphlet, in reply to Mr. Watson, who has awarded the prize of temper in this controversy to Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher. Mr. Sidney remarks, in a tone of surprise, "Wesley's biographer, Watson, a great and good man, surely was not aware of these expressions when he called the publications of his party 'models of temper, and calm but occasionally powerfully reproofing.'" Mr. Watson did not use the language here ascribed to him with reference to "his party" in general. He confines it to Mr. Wesley. Of the Vicar of Madeley, whose manner was not "calm," but animated, he speaks in different terms. "It is refreshing," says he, "to remark, in the writings of the 'saintly Fletcher,' so fine a union of strength and meekness; an edge so keen, and yet so smooth; and a heart kept in such perfect charity with his assailants, and so intent upon establishing truth, not for victory, but for salvation."

Whether Mr. Watson was aware of "the expressions" here imputed to Mr. John and Charles Wesley, we know not, nor need we stay to inquire, as they are irrelevant to the question at issue. Mr. Watson is speaking of the controversy which arose out of the Minutes of 1770, and which was carried on in sober prose; and Mr. Sidney professes to quote some poetry which was published several years before those Minutes were written! When Mr. Hill wrote, he was not sure that the poems were on sale, but apprehended that they might be out of print.

With respect to the "expressions" in these poems, so strangely introduced, it may be observed, (1.) That in controversy unverified quotations pass for nothing. On what subjects and occasions were the "poems" written? and where are they to be found? Till they are produced, and we can judge of the true meaning of the "expressions" which they are said to contain, they are of no avail in the argument. (2.) Some of the "expressions" objected to are contained in Scripture, and are therefore in themselves not liable to any just exception. They may be ill-applied, it is true; but having been used by Christ and his Apostles, they might be used by John and Charles Wesley without any just

own prejudices merely, and not the truth. For nothing are Mr. Fletcher's writings more remarkable than the light which they shed upon "difficult texts" of holy Scripture; and the light which he brings to the sacred books is not the "palpable obscure" of a vain metaphysical philosophy, affecting to be wise above what is written, and intruding into those things which are not revealed. It is the light which inspiration sheds upon itself, and which is elicited by comparing spiritual things with spiritual. No human compositions more effectually rebuke the practice of taking one half of the Scriptures, and leaving the other, than do those of the Vicar of Madeley. There is not a book in the English language equal to his "Scripture Scales," for "illustrating difficult texts," and guarding the inquirer against dangerous extremes. The method of ascertaining the mind of the Holy Ghost, by taking the Scriptures as a whole, and comparing one part with another, is universally allowed by sound Protestants to be the most just and unexceptionable; and this is precisely the plan which Mr. Fletcher pursued with unexampled success.

The effect of Mr. Fletcher's writings has been powerful, extensive, and lasting. Never since they appeared has the remark been called for in the Methodist Conference, "We have leaned too much towards Calvinism." Their influence

blame. (3.) One of the "expressions" at least is obviously falsified. All of them are professedly "taken out of different poems composed by gentlemen" of accurate scholarship, many specimens of whose versification are before the world. Will Mr. Sidney seriously maintain that the following sentence occurs in any "poem," written by John or Charles Wesley, or by any man that had the least conception of metrical composition: "Children of the old roaring, hellish murderer, who believe his lie?" Whatever Mr. Hill or Mr. Sidney may say, no man will ever believe that the learned and accomplished brothers, whom it is sought to degrade, ever published this "expression" in any "poem" with which they connected their names. (4.) Admitting the authenticity of "these expressions," and that they imply a just reflection upon the men to whom they are attributed, in what way, it may be asked, do they affect the character of Mr. Fletcher, who was the principal writer in defence of the Minutes? The "poems" from which they are said to be selected were written, if written at all, while he was a youth, in Switzerland, and had never set his foot upon British ground. How then do they prove him guilty of "acidity," or of anything else? Neither Mr. Sidney, nor Mr. Jones, nor the biographer of Lady Huntingdon, can believe that they reflect the slightest dishonour upon the Vicar of Madeley; yet every one of these gentlemen has produced "these expressions" to prove that he, as well as Mr. Wesley, was an angry disputant, notoriously deficient in Christian meekness!

upon the men who differ from him on the five points has also been most salutary, though few of them like to confess it. They have served to produce a more guarded and practical style of preaching and writing than formerly prevailed. Where are the Ministers now who would openly declare from the pulpit, that all the sins of the elect, past, present, *and to come*, are for ever cancelled? and that David was as much a child of God when committing adultery and murder, as when he was leading the devotions of the tabernacle? Yet these points, with others of a similar nature, were strenuously contended for in the controversy with Mr. Fletcher; and such was the Antinomianism which he attempted to “check.”

Few books in the English language have been more extensively read, during the last seventy years, than those of “the saintly Fletcher;” and the demand for them increases almost every year, both in England and upon the American continent. They are the most sought after and admired by persons of the deepest piety. To say that they “elicit no truth,” “illustrate no difficult” scripture, and serve only to “inflame the spirit of party,” is to contradict the testimony of twice ten thousand witnesses possessed of spiritual discernment, and of heavenly affections. It is as palpable an absurdity as to say, that Mr. Whitefield’s preaching was of no possible benefit to mankind.

Mr. Charles Wesley took a lively interest in the rise and progress of this controversy, though his name has rarely been connected with it. He corresponded with his friend, the Vicar of Madeley, and encouraged him in his arduous undertaking. Mr. Fletcher transmitted his manuscripts to him for revision, begging of him to expunge every expression that was calculated to give unnecessary pain, and to pay especial attention to the grammar and theology of the whole. He also confided to Mr. Charles Wesley the task of conducting them through the press, the correction of which was inconvenient to himself, because of his distance from London. The fact is, that nearly everything that Mr. Fletcher published, not even excepting his political tracts, and his treatise on original sin, passed under the eye and hand of Mr. Charles Wesley before it was given to the world. Their correspondence, therefore, was frequent and confidential, especially while this controversy was in progress. Not that the compositions

of his friend needed much emendation; but his criticisms gave Mr. Fletcher confidence, and were highly valued. In 1775 Mr. Fletcher said to him, "Nobody helps me but you; and you know how little you do it. Deprive me not of that little. Your every hint is a blessing to me." In another letter he says, "You have your enemies, as well as your brother. They complain of your love for music, company, fine people, great folks, and of the want of your former zeal and frugality. I need not put you in mind to cut off all sinful appearances. You were taught to do this before I knew anything of the matter. Only see you abound more and more, to stop the mouth of your adversaries, or of your jealous friends."

An extract from one of Mr. Charles Wesley's letters Mr. Fletcher has inserted in his answer to Sir Richard Hill. It accounts for some unguarded expressions in his early hymns. "I was once," says he, "on the brink of Antinomianism, by unwarily reading Crisp and Saltmarsh. Just then, warm in my first love, I was in the utmost danger, when Providence threw in my way Baxter's treatise, entitled, 'An Hundred Errors of Dr. Crisp demonstrated.' My brother was sooner apprehensive of the dangerous abuse which would be made of our unguarded hymns and expressions than I was. Now I also see and feel we must all sink, unless we call St. James to our assistance. Yet let us still insist as much or more than ever on St. Paul's justification. What God has joined together let no man put asunder. The great Chillingworth saw clearly the danger of separating St. James from St. Paul. He used to wish that whenever a chapter of St. Paul's justification was read, another of St. James might be read at the same time."

Though Lady Huntingdon was no party to the base attacks which were made upon Mr. Wesley's moral character, her eagerness to fix upon him the charge of heretical pravity inflicted a deep wound in the generous and upright mind of Charles; whose correspondence with her was indeed resumed, but never with its former cordiality and warmth.

Mr. Charles Wesley had the solid gratification of seeing his brother, as well as Mr. Fletcher, retire from this controversy with an untarnished reputation. Neither of them wrote anything of which their friends could be justly ashamed;

they freely attacked the principles of their opponents, but made no dishonourable reference to private character; and the absolute failure of all the attempts which were made to fix a stain upon Mr. John Wesley's morals, only served to establish the conviction of his purity. His assailants showed what they would have done, had they possessed the power; but, with all their means and appliances, they could adduce no proof whatever in support of their unchristian and cruel insinuations, which therefore recoiled upon their own heads.

It is only justice to Lady Huntingdon to say, that she did not retain to the end of her life the hostility to Mr. Wesley which marked her conduct when the controversy respecting the Minutes was begun. At that period her biographer says no less than "sixty Clergymen were employed by her;" so that she was the acknowledged head of a large body of people. Her inability to bear a rival in Mr. Wesley, who dissented from her creed, and the conspiracy which she headed, to ruin his character, and put an end to his influence, for giving a doctrinal warning to his Preachers, of which she chose to disapprove, have left a blot upon her spiritual escutcheon which no ingenuity can obliterate. The part which she took in reference to the Circular was altogether unjustifiable, and was especially revolting in a person of her sex. But considering the adulation which she was accustomed to receive from many quarters, as "the elect lady" of the age, and the unnatural position in which she was placed, the wonder is that she acted with so much humility and gentleness. If no man is wise at all times, we have no right to demand absolute discretion in a woman. It is honourable to Lady Huntingdon that she lived to regret the part which she had unhappily taken in respect of her spiritual father, and early religious friend and adviser.

She survived Mr. Wesley about five months. After his death a small tract was published, containing the interesting particulars of his last illness, with the expressions to which he gave utterance in the immediate prospect of dissolution. It was drawn up with the beautiful simplicity of truth, and bore the initials of his friend Elizabeth Ritchie. A copy of this document fell into the hands of Lady Huntingdon, who read it with superior interest, because, according to the natural course of things, the time of her own departure was at hand.

She sent for Joseph Bradford, who for many years had been Mr. Wesley's travelling companion, and asked him if this account of Mr. Wesley was true ; and whether he really died acknowledging his sole dependence upon the meritorious sacrifice of Christ, for acceptance and eternal life. He assured her Ladyship that the whole was strictly true ; and that, from his own knowledge he could declare, whatever reports to the contrary had been circulated, the principles which Mr. Wesley recognised upon his death-bed had invariably been the subjects of his ministry. She listened with eager attention to this statement ; confessed, she had believed that he grievously departed from the truth ; and then, bursting into tears, expressed her deep regret at the separation which had in consequence taken place between them. The spell, which ought never to have bound her spirit, was then broken. During his life-time it does not appear that she was at all reconciled to him ; but when he had yielded up his soul to God, and was placed beyond the reach of human censure, she acknowledged him, not as " a dreadful heretic," but as " a good Minister of Jesus Christ." * They now see eye to eye ; and their former misunderstandings are forgotten ; or, if remembered at all, are seen in connexion with that sacrificial blood through which they were mercifully atoned for and forgiven.

* The particulars of this interview Mr. Bradford related to the Rev. George Morley, by whom they were kindly communicated to the writer of this narrative.

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. CHARLES WESLEY removed his family from Bristol to London in the year 1771. He did not fix his residence in Hackney or Stoke-Newington, as he once intended, but in Chesterfield-street, St. Mary-le-bone. The circumstances which led him to reside there deserve to be recorded. When the Methodists of London and Bristol were subscribing towards a London residence for this honoured Minister, the proposal reached the ear of Mrs. Gumley, the aunt of Lady Robert Manners, (formerly Miss Degge,) and she immediately stopped further proceedings, by handing over, gratuitously, to her friends Mr. and Mrs. Charles Wesley, the lease (which had upwards of twenty years to run) of her handsome town residence. The house was richly furnished, and completely prepared for occupation. The cellars were well stocked with wine, and even with barrels of table-beer. All these accommodations this excellent lady generously presented to the Methodist Clergyman and his family, whom, it is needless to say, she highly esteemed. She did this at the very time that Lady Huntingdon withdrew her friendship from the Wesleys, because they refused, after her example, to change their creed. The house was subject to a yearly ground-rent, of which the half-yearly receipts remain. It was about three miles from the Foundery, where his brother generally resided when in London; so that they were at an inconvenient distance from each other. John regretted this, because it prevented him from consulting Charles on many subjects connected with their work, in which it was desirable that they should act by united counsels.

Before Mr. Charles Wesley removed the rest of his family from Bristol, he brought with him to London his eldest son, who bore his father's name, and when a mere boy commanded universal admiration by his extraordinary musical genius. The father was highly gratified with his son's abilities, and the respect which was everywhere shown him; but his own health was so delicate, that he was apprehensive of a speedy

removal from his wife and children, and an entrance into the world of spirits, to which many of his pious friends were already gone. The following are extracts from his letters to Mrs. Wesley, who was still in Bristol :—

“London, May 1st, 1771. I clearly saw it my duty to bring Charles up, although I were sure to drop my old bones in the ground adjoining. I have taken the best care of him I could ; and am still waiting upon him as his loving servant. On Tuesday evening, at Mr. Kelway’s, we met Mr. Smith and Mr. Tate. They stared, and looked at each other, as if they did not believe their own ears, while Charles played like his master. It was hard to say which of the three was most delighted. The first masters count it an honour to assist him.”

“May 16th. I want country air to perfect my recovery. Charles cannot be better. We rejoice in hope of seeing you all next week.

“Mrs. Ashlin thinks the person now employed in airing the beds, &c., would be a very proper servant. She is cleanly, sober, diligent, a hearer of the word, though not in society. We shall keep her, to keep up the fires, to keep the windows open, and to lie in the beds. When you come, you will do as you like.

“Give our love to dearest Mrs. Vigor, and her sisters, and her blessed, disconsolate friend. I nothing doubt our meeting again, unless I escape first.

“Morse will take care of the harpsichord ; but who of the cat ? If you cannot leave him in safe hands, Prudence must bring him up in a cage ; and if I finish my course here, I may bequeath him to Miss Derby.

“I am stepping into the pulpit. The Lord bless and prosper you and yours in all things !”

When Mr. Charles Wesley was settled with his family in London, he served the congregations and societies there with great efficiency, and cherished that spirit of prayer by which he had been distinguished from the time when he obtained the peace and holiness which are consequent upon a vital faith in Christ. There were seasons in which he was drawn out in intercession in behalf of particular friends, especially at the Lord’s table. A singular instance of this occurred in the year 1772. He remembered the arduous controversy in

which Mr. Fletcher was engaged, and one Sunday commended him with deep feeling to the especial care and blessing of God. He afterwards mentioned the subject in a letter to Mr. Fletcher, from whom he received the following remarkable answer :—

“July 5th, 1772. I thank you for the letters you have lately sent me. Your loving directions are seasonable. You asked me in one of them, how I found myself the Sunday before. Your question surprised me so much the more, as I had spent some time that day in wondering how I was inwardly loosed, and how prayer and praise came from a much greater depth than usual in my heart ; which, glory be to God, hath in general remained with me ever since, together with greater openings of love, and clearer views of Christian simplicity and liberty. I thought I was merely indebted to the Lord’s love for this enlargement ; but I am still more thankful that He would have my gratitude pass through the channel of brotherly love, by which his bounty came down to me. I desire, then, you will add thanksgiving to prayer.”

Mr. Charles Wesley’s friendship for his brother was tender and inviolable. Nothing could separate them in affection. They differed in their views respecting the Church, and on other questions ; but, to the end of their lives, their mutual love was constant and unimpaired. In the summer of 1775, Charles’s submission to the divine will was put to the severest test by an illness of his brother, from which his recovery was extremely doubtful. Mr. John Wesley was travelling in the north of Ireland, when he was seized with a fever of a very dangerous kind. His tongue was much swollen, and as black as a coal. He was convulsed all over ; and for some time his heart did not beat perceptibly, nor was his pulse discernible. Mr. Joseph Bradford, his faithful friend and travelling companion, addressed the following letter to Charles, apprizing him of his brother’s situation :—

“July 19th, 1775. Rev. and very dear Sir,—I suppose you have received my letter, dated the 16th, in which I informed you of your brother’s sickness. From the time I wrote he has continued very ill. On Saturday morning, with much entreaty, he was prevailed with to call in a Physician. The medicines which he proposed gave present ease,

and I was in hopes he would have soon recovered. In the afternoon he grew much worse, and continued so all night. About three yesterday morning he appeared to be in the agonies of death. I think his pulse beat at least one hundred and thirty times in a minute, his flesh was like fire, and he was convulsed from head to foot. But blessed be God, that He hath continued him so long, and endued his servant with much patience to suffer. What will be the event, God only knows. I fear. I think the fever is not so violent; but he continues very ill.

“Yesterday we left Tanderagee, and came to Mr. Grier’s, about a mile from Lisburn. The family are Methodists, and live in as handsome a manner as any in the kingdom, and have an estate which brings in some hundreds annually to support it. The people are friendly, and with pleasure provide all things necessary. Here he is to stay until the Lord is pleased to restore him, which I hope will be soon. Mr. Wesley is very happy and composed under this afflictive providence. He has no choice either to live or die, but with submission to the divine will. Yesterday morning one of our sisters, not knowing that he was ill, came from Armagh to Tanderagee, to hear him preach. He, seeing her come into the room, said, ‘Sister Russell came to hear me preach, but did not think she should come to see me die. The Lord does all things well.’

“When I informed your brother that I was writing to you, he desired me to send his love, and to tell you that he gains no ground, but is of opinion that when the fever is turned, he shall recover rapidly. The Lord hasten the time! A word of advice from you would be thankfully received.”

In this very trying emergency the public sympathy was strongly excited; for scarcely any person seems to have expected Mr. Wesley’s recovery. The newspapers announced that he was dead. Under this impression the Vicar of Shoreham wrote a letter of condolence to Charles; but hearing that Mr. Wesley was better, he forbore to send it. Mr. Fletcher was more prompt. He knew the unsettled state of the Methodist societies, for whose preservation no adequate provision was made in the event of Mr. Wesley’s death, and endeavoured to rouse Charles to a sense of his responsibility, that he might take his brother’s place; advising that the

senior Preachers should be convened together in London, and that some plan should be formed by their united counsels for carrying on the work of God; offering his own assistance, but with his characteristic meekness and humility. The following is his letter, which ought to be for ever preserved as a memorial of his kindness to the Wesleys, and fidelity to the cause which they lived to serve:—

“Madeley, July 2d, 1775. My very dear Brother,—The same post which brought me yours, brought me a letter from Ireland, informing me of the danger of your dear brother, my dear father, and of his being very happy in, and resigned to, the will of God. What can you and I do? What, but stand still, and see the salvation of God? The nations are before Him but as the dust that cleaves to a balance; and the greatest instruments have been removed. Abraham is dead; the fathers are dead; and if John come first to the sepulchre, you and I will soon descend into it. The brightest, the most burning and shining lights, like the Baptist, Mr. Whitefield, and your brother, were kindled to make the people rejoice in them ‘for a season,’ says our Lord. ‘For a season.’ The expression is worth our notice. It is just as if our Lord had said, ‘I give you inferior lights, that ye may rejoice in them for a season. But I reserve to myself the glory of shining for ever. The most burning lights shall fail on earth; but I, your Sun, will shine to all eternity.’

“Come, my dear brother, let the danger of our lights make us look to our Sun more steadily: and should God quench the light of our Jerusalem below, let us rejoice that it is to make it burn brighter in the Jerusalem which is above; and let us triumph in the inextinguishable light of our Sun, in the impenetrable strength of our Shield, and in the immovableness of our Rock.

“Amidst my concern for the church in general, and for Mr. Wesley’s societies in particular, I cannot but acknowledge the goodness of God, in so wonderfully keeping him for so many years, and in preserving him to undergo such labours as would have killed you and me ten times over, had we run the same heats of laborious usefulness. The Lord may yet hear prayer, and add a span to his useful life. But forasmuch as the immortality of the body does not belong to this state, and he has fulfilled the ordinary term of human life, in

hoping the best, we must prepare ourselves for the worst. The God of all grace and power will strengthen you on the occasion. Should your brother fail on earth, you are called not only to bear up under the loss of so near a relative ; but, for the sake of your common children in the Lord, you should endeavour to fill up the gap, according to your strength. The Methodists will not expect from you your brother's labours ; but they have, I think, a right to expect that you will preside over them while God spares you in the land of the living. A Committee of the oldest and steadiest Preachers may help you to bear the burden, and to keep up a proper discipline, both among the people and the rest of the Preachers : and if at any time you should want my mite of assistance, I hope I shall throw it into the treasury with the simplicity and readiness of the poor widow, who cheerfully offered her next to nothing. Do not faint. The Lord God of Israel will give you additional strength for the day ; and his angels, yea, his praying people, will bear you up in their hands, that you hurt not your foot against a stone ; yea, that, if need be, you may leap over a wall. I am by this time grey-headed, as well as you ; and some of my parishioners tell me that the inroads of time are uncommonly visible upon my face. Indeed I feel as well as see it myself, and learn what only time, trials, and experience can teach. Should your brother be called to his reward, I would not be free to go to London till you and the Preachers had settled all matters. My going just at such a time would carry the appearance of vanity, which I abhor. It would seem as if I wanted to be somebody among the Methodists. We heartily join here the prayers of the brethren for your brother, for you, and the societies. Paper fails, not love. Be careful for nothing. Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain you. Farewell in Christ."

By the merciful interposition of divine Providence, the threatening calamity was averted. Mr. Charles Wesley was not compelled to assume the government of the societies, under the pressure of which he would have inevitably sunk. His brother soon recovered, so as to be able to resume his labours ; and a few years afterwards he was led to make such legal provision for the perpetuity of the Connexion, as has been a means of its preservation and prosperity to the present day. When the danger was passed away, the venerable

Vicar of Shoreham addressed the following beautiful letter to Mr. Charles Wesley, in which he mentions a blessed revival of religion in his own parish, which had long been unfruitful under rich spiritual culture :—

“Sept. 27th, 1775. My Rev. and very dear Brother,—It is now a long time since I had the pleasure of seeing thee, or hearing from thee. The news of your brother’s recovery from the grave (to which the public papers had consigned him) prevented a letter of condolence from being sent you, which wanted only sealing up. Since that time we have heard both of your own sickness and restoration, upon which accounts we congratulate with you and my dear daughter, and your whole family, as well as with the whole society. The Lord has more work for your brother. When that is finished, the crown is ready. Go on, and prosper !

“All glory to God, there has been a very extraordinary outpouring of the Spirit amongst us, though altogether in a silent manner. We have not only a very large number of hearers, especially on Sunday evenings, so that in the summer a great many stand in the garden, but, blessed be God, we have many growing and increasing in divine grace. May the Lord still increase their numbers and increase their grace ! This must give you a particular pleasure, if you recollect that this very day, just twenty-nine years ago, we were saluted with noise, and dirt, and stones, and rotten eggs, after you had preached in the church for the first time, and which salutations continued long after we were returned home. How are times happily altered ! Glory be to God !

“As to myself, I am a standing monument of the divine goodness. Be you the judge. An ancient unworthy Divine, near the eighty-third year of his age, who never kept any assistant, (for so the Lord decreed,) is carried through his Sunday’s labour, forenoon and afternoon, sometimes a large communion, with other incidental duties, such as christenings and burials, and afterwards speaking and praying in the room ; but so assisted by divine goodness as seldom or never to experience any fatigue or weariness ! What miracles of mercy are these ! May I ever retain a due and grateful sense of them ! and may I ever labour to walk worthy of them ! I know you will join heartily in the same petitions. May the Lord hear both of us !

“I hope shortly to congratulate our dear brother *vivá voce*. I wrote not to him, as being assured he was overwhelmed with letters. We shall be glad when Providence brings you and yours this way. However, I know a time is coming when we shall all meet, and never part again. Our love and respects are with you all. The Lord be with us!

“Thine affectionately.”

Before Mr. John Wesley was seized with this dangerous illness, he had prepared a concise History of England for popular use, partly original, and partly abridged from various authors. He was a decided friend of monarchy, but no less a friend of civil and religious freedom; and the wrongs which were inflicted upon the Puritans and Nonconformists, under the Stuart dynasty, filled him with honest indignation. The correction of this work, as it passed through the press, was entrusted to his brother, who demurred to a censure passed upon Charles the First, whom some writers describe as a faithless tyrant, and others as a martyr. Charles wrote to his brother, proposing the omission of a clause; and as he did not receive an immediate answer, he again pressed the subject upon his brother, in the following letter, which is highly characteristic of the writer's principles and spirit:—

“Chesterfield-street, Dec. 29th, 1775. Dear Brother,—I must continue to plead for my namesake, till you grant my request, by omitting your ‘*but*.’ ‘He was rigorously just, but wanting in sincerity.’ ‘Just,’ but false. You mention it indeed as a supposition only; therefore you may more easily give it up. Such a drawback from his good character will exceedingly grieve more than me, as much as it will please the patriots and republicans. At such a time as this, especially, when it is the fashion to ‘blacken the tyrant,’ you and I should not join in the popular cry, but rather go against the stream. Let Macauley and company call the King's murder, ‘This great act of national justice.’ Let Cromwell declare, ‘He could not be trusted,’ to palliate his own villany. Let not your hand be upon him, or mine.”

Having, as he supposed, received his brother's silent consent to the proposed alteration, Mr. Charles Wesley returned the following answer:—“I am not such a corrector as N. N., or C. P., to put in or out, and give you no notice of it. Believ-

ing you have obliged me by granting my request, I have drawn a line over the Oliverian reflection, and accept your omitting it as the greatest favour and kindness you can do me."

In a memorandum affixed to copies of these letters, Mr. Charles Wesley says, "His final answer was, 'He could not in conscience say less evil of him.' 'With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.' Observe, ye who survive us!"*

His own views concerning the case of King Charles the First he has embodied in the following lines, which were "written after passing by Whitehall," the place where that unfortunate Monarch was beheaded:—

Unhappy Charles, mistaken and misled,
In error by a wretched father bred,
By flattery nursed, and disciplined to stray,
As born a Monarch for despotic sway;
Push'd on by Churchmen's interested zeal,
O'erruled by relatives beloved too well;
What shall I say? with partial fondness aim
To palliate faults thou didst thyself condemn?
Or, in the spirit of these furious times,
Blacken thy memory with fictitious crimes?
No: rather let me blame thy course begun,
Admire the glories of thy setting sun,
And virtues worthy a celestial crown.

Convinced of every error in thy reign,
Thy upright soul renounced them all; in vain!
Resolved to make the laws thy constant guide,
(And every heighten'd wrong *was* rectified,)
Rejoiced to bid the cause of discord cease,
And lay the basis sure of public peace.

But fruitless all a righteous Monarch's pains,
If God to plague our guilty land ordains,
Suffers his foes their fatal choice to feel,
Cries "Havoc," and lets slip the dogs of hell.
The champion fierce of violated laws,
His sword in prosperous rebellion draws,
And scorning all the laws of man and God,
Imbrues his ruffian hands in sacred blood,
Holds up the martyr's as a traitor's head,
And glories in the dire infernal deed!

* The sentence stands thus in Mr. Wesley's History of England:—"He was rigorously just; but is supposed to have been wanting in sincerity."—Vol. iii., p. 221.

When Mr. Fletcher manifested so tender a sympathy towards Mr. John Wesley, during his illness in Ireland, and offered his generous assistance in preserving the union of the Methodist Preachers and societies, it was not imagined that in the course of a few months the continuance of his own life would be less hopeful than that of his afflicted friend. Yet so it was. In the summer of 1776 his health failed, and he had all the symptoms of a confirmed consumption. The disease was doubtless accelerated, if it was not directly caused, by his intense and incessant application to study, during the preceding five years. It is indeed surprising that he should have been able, in so comparatively short a period, to produce so many works, displaying so much research and profound thought; for nearly the whole of his publications were written within this period, including those on the Calvinistic controversy, his "Appeal," on the doctrine of original sin, his political tracts, and some minor pieces. He did indeed enjoy the retirement of a country village; but his parish was extensive, and his official duties were numerous. Most of his books were written under circumstances of strong excitement; for the eyes of two eager parties were fixed upon him; he knew that every argument he employed would be strictly scrutinized; and his chief opponents were not at all scrupulous as to the use which they would make of any inadvertency that might be discovered in his reasonings. His was not a leisurely authorship, on such questions of theology as were most congenial with his own feelings. The subjects upon which he wrote were forced upon him by his opponents; and not a day was to be lost in supplying an antidote to what was conceived to be dangerous error. The wonder is, that his health did not sooner fail under the weight of responsibility which rested upon him.

While he suffered from what appeared to be incurable disease, prayer was made for him without ceasing, and by no man with greater ardour and importunity than Mr. Charles Wesley. Among his papers is a hymn, which he composed on the occasion, and which there is reason to believe was used by the societies in London and Bristol, especially at the weekly sacrament. It is entitled, "Prayer for the Rev. Mr. John Fletcher, June 30th, 1776;" and is as follows:—

Jesus, thy feeble servant see,
Sick is the man beloved by thee ;
Thy name to magnify,
To spread thy Gospel truths again,
His precious soul in life detain,
Nor suffer him to die.

The fervent prayer thou oft hast heard,
Thy mighty arm in mercy bared ;
Thy wonder-working power
Appear'd in all thy people's sight,
And stopp'd the spirit in its flight,
Or bade the grave restore.

In faith we ask a fresh reprieve ;
Frequent in deaths, he yet shall live,
If thou pronounce the word,
Shall spend for thee his strength renew'd,
Witness of the all-cleansing blood,
Forerunner of his Lord.

The Spirit which raised thee from the dead,
Be in its quick'ning virtue shed,
His mortal flesh to raise,
To consecrate thy human shrine,
And fill with energy divine
The Minister of grace.

Body and soul at once revive,
The prayer of faith in which we strive,
So shall we all proclaim,
According to thy gracious will,
Omnipotent the sick to heal,
In every age the same.

Soon after Mr. Charles Wesley had written this hymn, and while he was still uniting his supplications with those of the Methodists generally in behalf of the afflicted Vicar of Madeley, he was called to sympathize with Mr. Perronet, who had suffered a painful bereavement in the death of his son Charles. This very excellent man, who was brought to the knowledge of God in early life, through the instrumentality of Mr. Charles Wesley, and for some years was a zealous and useful Methodist Preacher, has been frequently mentioned in this narrative. His piety was deep and enlightened, and his abilities very considerable, as his compositions both in prose and verse testify ; but his health was delicate,

so that he was compelled to desist from his itinerant ministry. Somewhat more than twenty years before his death he attempted, with several others of his brethren who were like-minded, to introduce the sacraments into the Methodist meeting-houses, for which he was severely rebuked by Mr. Charles Wesley; and it does not appear that he persisted in this course, when he found that those who were over him in the Lord were decidedly opposed to it. He was a very holy man; a consistent witness of the full Christian salvation; and a principal instrument of that extraordinary revival of religion in Shoreham, of which his father speaks in language of grateful joy. About seven months before he died he was visited at Canterbury by Mr. John Wesley, who says in his Journal, "I had a long conversation with that extraordinary man, Charles Perronet. What a mystery of Providence! Why is such a saint as this buried alive by continual sickness?" His aged and venerable father was deeply affected by the death of this son, whom he tenderly loved. Mr. Charles Wesley sent him a letter of condolence, which the sorrowing parent thus acknowledges:—

"August 13th. My very dear and Rev. Brother,—I thank you for your very kind and Christian condolence. Sympathizing joys and tears are duties becoming Christians here below. The Gospel was not designed to destroy our passions, but to direct them aright, and to regulate all their motions.

"My late dear Charles led a painful, sorrowing life, almost all his days. I speak as to the outward man; but at his heart I believe was always sincere before God. He felt inward comforts, which this world could neither give nor rob him of. God wisely and graciously adapts all our sufferings to our wants and necessities, and kindly makes poor nature often to groan, out of pure love and compassion.

"All glory to his great name! I can speak this from my own happy experience. My ways have been spread with briars and thorns, by far the greatest part of my life; and many a bitter cup has my heavenly Father forced me to drink. But, to the praise of his grace, He enables me to see the suitableness and necessity of his dealings with me, and at the same time to rejoice and bless his holy name. What love, what condescension is here! Is it not abundant goodness in the Lord, to guide us in our temporal and spiritual concerns?

But how astonishing is that grace which stoops so low as to give us the reasons why He deals thus and thus with us ! O, my dear brother, how good is God ! You know Him to be so by frequent experience. We can both say, with the royal Psalmist, ‘They that know thy name will put their trust in thee.’

“ How long my stay below shall be, is only known to God. When He has nothing more for me to do or suffer, I have an humble, full assurance, that, through the merits and mediation of the Lord Jesus, He will send for me home, where I trust I shall one day see my whole dear family and yours, and rejoice with all the other children of God, through a glorious eternity. I send my love to my dear sister, yourself, and dear family. The Lord Jesus be with all of us !

“ Thine most affectionately.”

In the year 1777 the public mind was strongly excited on finding a Clergyman of celebrity and superior abilities convicted of felony, and placed under sentence of death. That unhappy man was Dr. William Dodd, whose preaching and authorship had long rendered his name familiar to all classes of people. His publications were numerous, amounting to upwards of fifty, among which was a valuable Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, in three folio volumes, which he had compiled from various sources, especially the inedited papers of Dr. Cudworth, which he by mistake attributed to Locke, and those of Dr. Waterland. He took a very active part in the erection of the Magdalen Hospital, for which he acquired a just popularity ; and his ministry attracted many hearers. Vanity, accompanied by a lavish expenditure, was his ruin. Being pressed with pecuniary difficulties, he committed an act of forgery upon the Earl of Chesterfield, who had formerly been his pupil, for which he was condemned to be hanged ; and all attempts to obtain for him even a commutation of punishment were unavailing.

No class of people under heaven had a livelier interest in the compassion of Mr. Charles Wesley than the guilty victims of law, among whom the humane and once-popular Dr. Dodd now took his place. In the days of his prosperity he had often cast a slur upon Mr. John Wesley and his creed ; but in his trouble and humiliation he sought the counsel and asked for the prayers of the itinerant and field

Preacher. Mr. Wesley visited him in prison, accompanied by his brother Charles. They found him with every mark of true penitence, and both had a cheering hope that he obtained mercy at the hands of God, though the law and its administrators were inexorable. The yearning and devout pity of Mr. Charles Wesley's heart is particularly manifest in the verses which he wrote on the mournful occasion. His tender solicitude ceased not till the repentant transgressor was placed beyond the reach of all human help. While the fate of Dodd was yet undecided, Mr. Charles Wesley thus poured forth the feelings of his heart, in "A Prayer for Dr. Dodd under Condemnation :"—

God, ever near to the distress'd,
When to thy gracious throne they fly,
In ours regard thy Son's request,
In ours attend thy Spirit's cry.

The hearts of Kings are in thy hand,
Turn'd as the rivers of the sea,
They melt at thy supreme command,
And take the course prescribed by thee.

Whom thy Vicegerent we confess,
To mercy, Lord, his heart incline,
And on his soften'd soul impress
That brightest character divine.

Now let him kindly condescend,
Reverse the merciless decree,
And to a guilty worm extend
The grace he needs himself from thee.

The mercy ask'd in Jesu's name
Be in his royal bosom found,
The bowels of that bleeding Lamb
In him, in him this moment sound !

If thou our instant suit approve,
If mercy be thy own design,
Give him no rest, Almighty Love,
Till his resolve submits to thine.

But if thy sovereign, awful will
Hath fix'd a dying sinner's doom,
Thy pardon on his conscience seal,
The earnest sure of joys to come.

Whom man accounts not fit to live,
Thy poor repenting servant own,
Into thy Mercy's arms receive,
And make him partner of thy throne.

While the Doctor was under sentence of death, Miss Bosanquet, who was afterwards married to Mr. Fletcher, carried on a regular correspondence with him on the all-important subject of his personal salvation; and few persons were better qualified to give him the advice and encouragement that he needed. Mr. John Wesley intimated to the Doctor in his cell, that perhaps some such humiliating process was necessary to bring him to repentance, and a believing acceptance of Christ as his Saviour from sin; and it is edifying to see the critic, the orator, the commentator, the elegant scholar, meekly receiving instruction from a sensible and devout lady, who from her own experience could explain to him the nature and fruits of justifying faith. She knew "the sinner's short way to God:" a secret which many an erudite teacher never understood.

He highly appreciated her Christian services, and for her satisfaction sent her the following note:—"June 25th, 1777. My dear Friend,—On Friday morning I am to be made immortal! I die with a heart truly contrite, and broken under a sense of its great and manifold offences, but comforted and sustained by a firm faith in the pardoning love of Jesus Christ. My earnest prayers to God are, that we may meet and know each other in that kingdom towards which you have been so long and so happily travelling. I return you my most affectionate thanks for all your friendly attention to me; and have no doubt, should any opportunity offer, you will remember my excellent but most afflicted partner in distress. I do not know where to direct to worthy Mr. Parker, but beg to trouble you with my dying love and kind remembrance to him. The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirits! Amen."

The importance which Mr. Charles Wesley attached to this document may be learned from the fact, that he treasured up among his papers a copy of it in his own hand-writing. On the morning of June 27th, 1777, the day of the execution, he wrote the following impressive stanzas:—

Refuge supreme of sad Despair,
 The outcast's Hope, the sinner's Friend,
 For him we breathe our latest prayer,
 Whose life hath reach'd its shameful end :
 For him we in thy Spirit groan,
 And bear our burden to the throne.

The mercy which he sought from man,
 From cruel man he could not find ;
 But can he ask thy grace in vain ?
 Lover and Saviour of mankind,
Thy mercy and *thy* grace impart,
 And fill with peace his happy heart.

Give him the sting of death to feel,
 With all his cancell'd sins, removed ;
 Now in his soul thyself reveal,
 So dearly bought, so dearly loved ;
 Challenge his parting soul for thine,
 And swallow' up death in life divine !

What Mr. Charles Wesley thought of the Ministers of State, who turned a deaf ear to the cry for mercy in this most melancholy case, may be learned from the following lines, which he wrote "after the execution :"—

Ah, who the ways of Providence can know,
 Distributing or good or ill below ?
 M——d consents that murderers should live,
 And Sodom's sons the royal grace receive ;
 Mercy the merciful cannot obtain,
 And contrite Dodd for pity sues in vain !
 But, lo, the righteous Judge shall quickly come,
 And every soul receive his equal doom.
 Who mercy now to penitents deny,
 Guilty yourselves, and soon condemn'd to die,
 (Yourselves to felons if ye dare prefer,)
 Judgment unmix'd ye for yourselves prepare,
 And death eternal at the last great bar !

It will be observed, that Dr. Dodd, in his last note to Miss Bosanquet, requests her, should it ever be in her power, to befriend his bereaved wife. With this touching request there can be no doubt that Miss Bosanquet would be ready to comply. But her aid could be of little avail. The loss of Dr. Dodd's character, his imprisonment, his trial, his condemnation, the suspense connected with the unsuccessful attempts to obtain a commutation of punishment, and, above all, the

terrible execution, were too much for the affectionate and sensitive mind of Mrs. Dodd to sustain. Reason fled; and this unfortunate lady died a maniac, at Ilford, in Essex. Such were the bitter fruits of unsanctified pulpit popularity!

In the summer of 1778 Mr. Charles Wesley spent several weeks in Bristol, at his brother's request, his wife and children meanwhile paying a visit to Mr. Russell, landscape and portrait painter, near Guildford, in Surrey. The several branches of Mr. Charles Wesley's family sat to this artist. When on his way to Bristol, Charles addressed the following letter to his wife. The young ladies whom he mentions were his nieces.

“Newbury, August 17th, 1778. My dear Partner,—I served West-street chapel yesterday afternoon. Soon after five this morning my brother and Dr. Coke took me up, and brought me hither. To-morrow evening I expect to sleep at Nancy Chapman's.

“You read in the papers poor Mr. Toplady's death, and the Duke of Ancaster's. Last Friday Mrs. Judd departed in perfect peace. I send a few lines to her inconsolable partner.

“My brother intends to call on the family at Guildford on his way back to London. Possibly I may introduce him: meanwhile they have my heart.

“On Wednesday my youthful brother sets out for Cornwall. He seems as active and zealous as ever. Lizzy Ellison he is sending to keep school in Yorkshire. N. Lambert, I doubt not, will be soon provided for. She is a serious, solid, deserving girl. How unlike her cousin! I wish you would write immediately to Mrs. Milly, and employ her to get her (if she can) a good place, which will be better and safer than business.

“Assure me Sam rides every day; Charles rises at six, Sally at seven, her mother before eight; and that my scholars go on with their Latin; at least, do not stand still.”

His next letter, which is dated, Bristol, Sept. 22d, 1778, speaks of his infirm state of health.

“My dearest Sally,—Sister Stafford, whom I called on, informed me of Mr. Reeves's departure last night. All his hope, he said, was in his Redeemer; that He would save him as He did the penitent thief.

“I creep along the streets, tottering over the grave. My

strength seems to abate daily, perhaps through my long walks,—

‘ This course of vanity almost complete,
Tired in the field of life, I hope retreat
In the still shades of death : for dread, and pain,
And grief shall find their shafts elanced in vain,
And their points broke, retorted from the head,
Safe in the grave, and free among the dead.’

“ In my way from Mr. Lidiard’s, to Mr. Hopkins’s, this morning, I very narrowly escaped being crushed to death by a waggon. There was room enough between the wall and waggon, for me to pass, when I observed, within two yards of the wheel, the waggoner drove nearer the wall. I perceived, if I advanced a step, I must be crushed, and in that moment sprung back, and ran over the fellow. Had I beat him down, he knew he deserved it, and worse ; for he plainly designed to run over me.

“ I dined with my brother and his Preachers at Mr. Hopkins’s, whose son and daughter adorn the Gospel. He himself, in Mr. Lidiard’s judgment, is the honestest man in Bristol.

“ You forget that I did not expect an end of your Chancery suit till the days of your children’s children. But ye have a better and more enduring substance. Wishing you the earnest of it in your hearts, I commend you all to God in Christ.”

On the 1st of October he addressed the following valuable letter to his daughter, who was pursuing her youthful studies :—“ Bristol. My dear Sally,—Your friends and ours at the Common have laid us under great obligations. I wish I could return them, by persuading *her* to seek till she finds the pearl, which is constant happiness ; and by persuading *him* to give himself entirely to One whose service is perfect freedom, and whose favour and love is heaven in both worlds.

“ I never thought the bands would suit you. Yet many of them possess what you are seeking. You also shall bear witness of the power and peace, the blessedness of heart-religion. You also shall know the Lord, if you follow on to know Him.

“ Other knowledge is not worth your pains. Useful knowledge, as distinguished from religious, lies in a narrow

compass, and may be soon attained, if your studies are well guarded and directed. We must have a conference on this subject. We may also read your verses together. They want perspicuity, which should be the first point; but they are worth correcting.

“All your powers and faculties are so many talents, of which you are to give an account. You improve your talent of understanding, when you exercise it in acquiring important truth. You use your talent of memory aright, when you store it with things worth remembering, and enlarge by using and employing it. You should therefore be always getting something by heart. Begin with the first book of Prior’s Solomon, the vanity of knowledge. Let me see how much of it you can repeat, when we meet.

“Miss Hill is likely now to be a good fortune. You need not envy her, if you are a good Christian. Seek first the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you. Charles has ■ turn to generosity; Sam to parsimony. You must balance them both. Or, you may follow your mother’s and my example, and keep in the golden mean.

“There are many useful things which I can teach you, if I live a little longer. But I dare never promise myself another year. You know, I suppose, that October 9th I hope to reach Chesterfield-street. Your aunts allure me the next day to Tarriers, that I may spend two or three days with them, before I carry your mother and brothers home. It is utterly uncertain *how* I shall be after my long journey.

“Miss Morgan is gone to Wales, full fraught with knowledge, which she may be safely trusted with; for she knows Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. There poor Prior came short: therefore his Solomon makes so melancholy a conclusion.

“Probably I have taken my last leave of Bristol. Certainly I shall never more be separated eight weeks from my family. I half-repent my leaving you, last Thursday night, which I spent in pain, and three days more in confinement. I am nourishing myself up for a journey, with my philosophical brother. Joseph attends us, and will look after

“My dearest Sally’s loving father and friend.”

Three days afterwards he wrote to his wife, who had now returned to London: “Oct. 4th. I cannot yet inform my

dear partner when we are likely to meet, for more reasons than one. My pain is brought back through my packing yesterday. If it increases, travelling will be impossible. But I think to-morrow's work will be my protection. I got little rest last night after preaching. T. Lewis takes care to send me home in a coach. Who would take so much thought for me in London?

"My brother has lent me his chaise to London; but his man Jesse is gone to see his friends at Salisbury, and not yet returned. The horses are good for nothing without the driver.

"When do your children return home? I shrink at the thought of having my horse from the Foundery; but I have no choice. Charles's age, as well as price, will keep him from many scholars. He can no more depend on his great friends than on Mr. Madan.

"I am nursing myself up for to-morrow. Love and blessing to Sam. Love to the other house. The Lord be your Shield. Good night at eight; for I am just going to bed."

Having returned to London, he again wrote to his daughter, who still remained at Guildford: "Marybone, Oct. 11th. My dear Sally,—I greatly miss you here, yet comfort myself with the thought that you are happy in your friends at Guildford. For their sake, as well as yours, I am content to want you a little longer; but hope nothing will hinder our meeting on Friday next.

"I think you may avail yourself of my small knowledge of books and poetry. I am not yet too old to assist you a little in your reading, and perhaps improve your taste in versifying. You need not dread my severity. I have a laudable partiality for my own children. Witness your brothers, whom I do not love a jot better than you: only you be as ready to show me your verses as they their music.

"The evenings I have set aside for reading with you and them. We should begin with history. A plan or order of study is absolutely necessary. Without that, the more you read, the more you are confused, and never rise above a smatterer in learning.

"Take care you do not devour all Mr. Russell's library. If you do, you will never be able to digest it. Your mother

joins me in love to Charles and you, and all your hospitable friends. When shall we see Mr. John Russell?

“I am almost confined with a swelled face. It will probably subside before you return. Direct a few lines for me at the Foundery, whence my horse is brought every morning. If Charles does not make more haste, Sam will overtake him in Latin. Till twelve I dedicate to all three. Wishing you the true knowledge, and the true happiness, I remain

“My dear Sally’s father and friend.”

When Mr. Charles Wesley left Bristol in 1778, he thought it doubtful whether he should ever see that city again, such was his feebleness, occasioned by age and disease. Yet at the close of the following year we find him there. Some person, under the influence of angry feeling, had expressed a wish for his brother’s death; and he immediately turned the imprecation to a good account by publishing in the form of a hand-bill the following prayer for his life. It was first sung in the society-meeting at Charles’s dictation.

Jesus, thy hated servant own,
And send thy glorious Spirit down,
In answer to our prayers :
While others curse, and wish him dead,
Do thou thy choicest blessings shed,
And crown his hoary hairs.

Not for his death but life we pray,
In mercy lengthen out his day,
Our venerable guide ;
LONG MAY HE LIVE thy flock to keep,
Protect from wolves thy lambs and sheep,
And in his bosom hide.

LONG MAY HE LIVE to serve thy cause,
To spread the victory of thy cross,
To minister thy grace,
And late to’ increase thy church in heaven,
With all the children thou hast given,
Appear before thy face.

Thou God that answerest by fire,
With fervent faith and strong desire,
Whom we present to thee,
Fill with pure love his ravish’d breast,
And let the Spirit of glory rest
On all thy church—and me !

Me, me, thy meanest messenger,
Admit his happiness to share,
And intimately one,
Through life, through death, together guide,
To sing with all the sanctified
Around thy azure throne.

The year 1780 is remarkable in the annals of England on account of the destructive riots in London, which took place in connexion with the insane exploits of Lord George Gordon, of anti-Popish notoriety. During the preceding year an Act of Parliament had been passed in favour of the Roman Catholics in England and Wales, freeing them from several degrading and injurious disabilities under which they had previously laboured. In consequence of this, they began to exert themselves for the propagation of their tenets, in a manner which created considerable alarm. A Society was formed, under the name of "The Protestant Association," one leading object of which was to obtain a repeal of the late statute, which was alleged to be dangerous to the Protestant religion. Of this institution Lord George Gordon, who was a member of the House of Commons, and at least a man of weak intellect, was made the President. Neither of the Wesleys appears to have been a member of the Association; but soon after it was organized, John wrote a letter, which was inserted in one of the public papers, attempting to prove, that no Roman Catholic could give any adequate security for his loyal behaviour under any government that his Church might deem heretical. This letter, in which he spoke favourably of the published Address of the Association, drew him into a controversy with Father O'Leary, a Romish Priest, who denied that his Church had ever promulgated the doctrine, "that no faith is to be kept with heretics." In this controversy Mr. Wesley disavows all wish to coerce the Roman Catholics. He would concede to them full liberty to practise their own forms of worship, and profess their peculiar tenets; but he would withhold from them the power to injure their Protestant fellow-subjects, because their Church would justify them in the abuse of that power, should a favourable opportunity occur.

A petition to the Legislature, praying for a repeal of the late Act, was prepared by the Association; and great zeal

was manifested in procuring signatures to it. To this document no less than one hundred thousand persons are said to have affixed their names ; and, to give it the greater weight, the petitioners were invited to meet in St. George's-fields, and thence to walk in procession to the House of Commons, on the day that the petition was to be presented by the President of the Association. About fifty thousand persons accordingly assembled, and accompanied Lord George to Westminster, on the 2d of June. It is more easy to collect such an immense assemblage of people than to control and direct them. There is no reason to believe that the persons who arranged the proceedings of this day intended anything directly mischievous ; yet the result was most calamitous, both with respect to property and life. On that day the populace ill-treated several members of both Houses of Parliament ; and in the evening a mob pulled down the Romish chapel of the Sardinian Ambassador, in Lincoln's-inn-fields, and another in Warwick-street, Golden-square. After this a scene of unexampled devastation ensued. The dwelling-houses of Roman Catholics, as well as their places of worship, were demolished, and the materials burned in the streets. Protestant Senators, especially those who were known to have been favourable to the Act, were subjected to every outrage, and were glad to escape with their lives. Kennet, the Lord Mayor of London, had neither understanding nor energy to meet this fearful state of things ; and the other Magistrates appear to have been panic-struck ; so that for several days and nights no effectual resistance was offered to the rioters. Some of them were indeed apprehended, and lodged in Newgate ; but their infuriated and daring brethren destroyed the gaol by fire, and liberated the guilty inmates. The civic authorities being powerless, the Government at length interposed ; the military were called into action ; many lives were in consequence sacrificed ; but the riots were effectually quelled, and further mischief was prevented. The whole affair was alike disgraceful to the people, and to the magistracy. One party were cruel and lawless, the other were cowards.

At this time Mr. John Wesley was pursuing his itinerant ministrations in the north of England ; but Charles was in London, an agonized spectator of the miseries of anarchy. He wrote to his brother on the 8th of June, giving him an

account of what was passing around him. He says, "The floods have risen, and lift up their voice. Last night the mob were parading, and putting us in bodily fear. My wife and sister Thackwray kept a watch-night.

"Some of the Tabernacle have asked if Charles Wesley was not with the petitioners; and were surprised to hear I was not. 'What then,' said they, 'does he not stand up for the Protestant cause?'

"You read a very small part of the mischief done in the papers. It is nothing, they say, to what they intend to do. But they have made a good beginning! Brother Thackwray was an eye-witness. He saw them drag the Bishop of Lincoln out of his coach, and force him to kneel down. They treated him unmercifully; began to pull the house down, to which he fled for shelter; were scarcely persuaded by the owner (whose wife, big with child, was almost frightened to death) to let him escape at eleven at night.

"Another Bishop wisely cried out, 'Huzza! No Popery!' and was dismissed with shoutings. Lord Mansfield would have reasoned with them; but they would not hear him, and handled him almost as roughly as the Bishop of Lincoln. They arrested several of the members, particularly Sir George Saville, broke his wheels in pieces, and forced him to sit in his carriage on the ground. He durst not stir out of it. They pulled off the Archbishop's wig.

"Imagine the terror of the poor Papists. I prayed with the Preachers at the chapel, and charged them to keep the peace. I preached peace and charity, the one true religion, and prayed earnestly for the trembling, persecuted Catholics. Never have I found such love for them as on this occasion; and I believe most of the society are like-minded.

"General Monkton computed the mob at ninety thousand; yet said he would engage to conquer them all with five hundred soldiers.

"To-morrow they promise to demolish the nunneries at Hammersmith. It will be a day of business at the House of Parliament, and in the city.

"Monday noon. I breakfasted with John Pawson, John Atlay, and Dr. Coke, leaving a bonfire behind me of the spoils of chapels. John Atlay I found in a dreadful taking.

He had been kept up all night by the bonfire in Moorfields. The mob was busied with destroying the remains of the chapel there, and three large houses adjoining, (one the Priest's,) of which nothing has escaped the flames. The instruments which the Associators make use of first are boys with hatchets, who coolly cut everything to pieces, then bring it out, and cast it into the fire. An engine stands by in readiness *to prevent mischief*.

“John Atlay trembled for our chapel. The same incendiaries, if employed and paid, would as freely burn us and ours.”

On the same day Mr. Charles Wesley addressed the following letter to his daughter, who was at the house of a friend in the country:—“Dear Sally,—I have but a minute for writing. We are all well: your mother not yet frightened out of her wits. Last night she sheltered her sons at your aunt's, and sat up to guard them. She wants to fly to Wales. I offer to send her and Sam to Bristol. Charles will stay with me, and trust Providence. Matters here are in a dreadful situation. You are happily out of their reach. Particulars you may read in the papers.”

On the 14th of the month he again addressed her:—“My dear Sally,—The roaring of the waves is ceased; but the agitation continues. If God had not rebuked the madness of the people at the very crisis, London had now been no more! No wonder your mother was terrified, when I was *proscribed* as a Popish Priest: for I never signed the Petition, or ranked among the Patriots.

“The den of lions is as safe a place as any. London, Wales, Wick, is alike; for the Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. I leave you safe in the everlasting arms. Were I like Nehemiah, I would say, ‘Should such a man as I flee?’ Our faith will be put to the trial on Monday. But God has given a token to them that fear Him.”

There was considerable mystery connected with these destructive movements. It seemed incredible that such immense assemblages of people could be collected together daily, and carry on so methodically, and with such determined perseverance, their schemes of hostility to the Romanists and their friends, unless there were one or more

designing minds secretly directing the whole. England was then at war with France and America; and some people suspected that the gold of these countries was employed on the occasion. Others thought that the more violent of the Whig politicians were concerned in the affair, for the purpose of rendering the Government increasingly odious, and of bringing about a change of Administration. But of the correctness of these surmises no proof was ever adduced. Lord George Gordon, who appeared to be the most directly concerned, as the instigator of the mischief, was apprehended and tried; but there being no evidence that he was implicated in any of the outrages that were perpetrated, he was acquitted. When once the public peace was broken, and it was seen that the civil authorities were intimidated, so that men might engage in riot and plunder with impunity, idle and dissolute people in general would be ready to join the fray. Mobs in all ages resemble that at Ephesus: "Some cried one thing, and some another: for the assembly was confused; and the more part knew not wherefore they were come together." Notwithstanding Mr. John Wesley's Protestant letter, the destruction of his chapel in the City-road, then newly built, was apprehended; and most probably it would have shared the fate of what were called mass-houses, had it not been for the interference of the military, by which the evil was arrested in its progress.

In the midst of these exciting scenes, it was not likely that Mr. Charles Wesley's muse would be silent. He beheld with indignation the malice of the rioters, and the womanish fears of the London Magistrates, and lashed them both with merciless severity in a poem which he published under the title of, "The Protestant Association," in four cantos; to which he added two satirical addresses to the City, rebuking them for their disloyalty to the King, when he, in pity for their helplessness, had saved them from ruin, by his timely and spirited interposition. Thus he speaks of the city authorities, and of the rioters before whom they quailed:—

Of neither evidence nor warrant
Afraid, as an outrageous current,
They now the dams and banks o'erflow,
And menace every Popish foe.

“Down with the mass-houses,” they cry ;
 And Walworth’s * successor stands by.
 The city’s meek administrator,
 A tame, not *unconcern’d*, spectator,
 Quakes as the conflagration rages,
 And pays the devil’s slaves their wages,
 With, “Come, my lads, enough is done ;
 Take this, and quietly be gone !”
 The Aldermen in corners hide,
 And wisely for themselves provide ;
 The Shrieves an awful distance keep,
 Or—sometimes—venture at a peep !
 The Justices with dread look on,
 Till their own houses are pull’d down,
 Content the mob should burn their hives,
 If they will only spare their lives.

He thus personates the mob, in their indiscriminate attacks upon life and property. Mr. Romaine, it appears, had refused to join the Association, and was therefore an object of popular vengeance.

The chapels were a good beginning,
 A hint to signify our meaning ;
 But Protestants or Papists all
 Shall now without distinction fall :
 Whether of high or low condition,
 Whoever sign’d not the petition :
 The foreigners by labour fed,
 Who rob the people of their bread,
 Bishops, and Lords, and gentlemen,
 Who proudly o’er the people reign,
 And all the men on gain intent,
 And all the tools of Government ;
 The Government o’erturn’d shall be,
 And mourn its sad catastrophe.

But O what death doth he require,
 Who cast our names into the fire,
 Repulsed and treated us with scorn ?
 He, and his house and church, shall burn.
 That rogue Romaine, we soon shall have him ;
 Nor Mence’s † tuneful voice shall save him ;

* Walworth was the bold and loyal Lord Mayor of London, who, with one blow of his sword, laid the incendiary Wat Tyler dead at his feet. His “successor” was Kennet, whose cowardice the poet describes.

† The Rev. Benjamin Mence, supposed to be the finest counter-tenor in England. He was Minor Canon at St. Paul’s.—Manuscript note by Miss Wesley.

(Who would not the Associates join,
 Or list beneath a madman's sign,)
 Old Wesley too, to Papists kind,
 Who wrote against them for a blind,
 Himself a Papist still in heart,
 He and his followers shall smart.
 Not one of his fraternity
 We here beneath our standard see,
 To which whole regiments resort
 Both from the Lock * and Tottenham-court.†

Very different were the feelings with which Mr. Charles Wesley contemplated the fate of the innocent sufferers. Hence he published "Hymns written in the Time of the Tumults, June, 1780;" commending the persecuted Romanists to the merciful protection of God; praying for the King and royal family; for the suppression of anarchy, and the revival of law; and that the guilty contrivers of the evil might be brought to justice. Two specimens of this remarkable tract are subjoined:—

Thou most compassionate High Priest,
 In answer to our joint request,
 United to thy own,
 With pity's softest eye behold
 The sheep which are not of this fold,
 The church in Babylon.

The ignorant who miss their way,
 Nor wilfully, but weakly, stray;
 O let thy bowels move
 To these, by furious hate pursued,
 And from the frantic multitude
 Conceal their lives above.

As sheep appointed to be slain,
 By cruel, persecuting men,
 By fierce fanatic zeal;
 By Christian wolves, *reform'd* in name,
 Whose dire atrocious deeds proclaim
 The synagogue of hell.

* The Lock Hospital was Mr. Madan's place of worship.

† The Tottenham-court chapel was built by Mr. Whitefield, and belonged to the Calvinistic Methodists.

Thy help to the distress'd afford,
 The men that tremble at thy word,
 The quiet of the land ;
 The worshippers, if blind, sincere,
 Who honour thy Vicegerent * here,
 And bless his mild command.

And O, beneath thy mercy's wings,
 Hide and preserve the best of Kings,
 Our King by right divine :
 His consort in thy bosom bear,
 His children make thy darling care,
 And seal them ever thine.

The father of his people bless
 With outward and internal peace ;
 And when his work is done,
 Our hoary patriot King receive,
 Redeem'd from earth, with thee to live,
 And wear a heavenly crown.

The following was written on the memorable 8th of June :—

Saviour, thou dost their threat'nings see,
 Who rage against our King and thee,
 Nor know thy bridle in their jaws
 Restrains the friends of Satan's cause.

As in religion's cause they join,
 And blasphemously call it thine,
 The cause of persecuting zeal,
 Of treason, anarchy, and hell.

See where the' impetuous waster comes,
 Like Legion rushing from the tombs ;
 Like stormy seas, that toss and roar,
 And foam, and lash the trembling shore !

“ Havock ! ” the' infernal Leader cries ;
 “ Havock ! ” the' associate host replies ;
 The rabble shouts, the torrent pours,
 The city sinks, the flame devours !

A general consternation spreads,
 While furious crowds ride o'er our heads ;
 Tremble the powers thou didst ordain,
 And rulers bear the sword in vain.

* King George.

Our arm of flesh entirely fails,
 The many-headed beast prevails ;
 Conspiracy the State o'erturns,
 Gallia exults, and London burns !

Arm of the Lord, awake, put on
 Thy strength, and cast Apollyon down ;
 Jesus, against the murderers rise,
 And blast them with thy flaming eyes.

Forbid the flood our land to' o'erflow,
 Tell it, "Thou shalt no farther go ;
 My will be done, my word obey'd,
 And here let thy proud waves be stay'd !"

These troubles in the State were connected with uneasiness in the church. The difference of opinion and feeling which had long subsisted between Mr. John and Charles Wesley, with respect to the established Church, was at this period undiminished. John witnessed the spread of religion with the liveliest gratitude to God, and was full of hope and confidence in regard of the future. Charles thought there was in many of the Preachers and societies a strong bias in favour of separation, from which he apprehended a calamity no less terrible than the breaking up of the Methodists into innumerable Dissenting sects. The only means of preventing this evil, which he thought would entirely destroy the good that had been done, he deemed a strict union with the Church of England. John beheld almost everywhere the societies enlarged, by the accession of persons who were really turned from sin to holiness ; and this he felt to be a benefit of the most substantial kind. He did not as yet see how the Preachers and people could be kept together when he was no more ; but he was assured that the work was the Lord's, and in his hands it might be safely left. Permanent evil, he knew, could not result from the spread of vital religion, the love of God and man, springing from a lively faith in the world's Redeemer. Unless the Preachers declared themselves to be decided Churchmen, Charles eyed them with alarm. If they were zealous for God, and laboured with all their might for the conversion of sinners, John loved them, and encouraged them in their work. He resolved to do what he could to prevent them and the societies from leaving the Church ; but

their continuance in it was with him a subordinate object. His great concern was, to save souls from sin and hell.

Mr. Charles Wesley attended the Conference of 1780, which was held in Bristol. He saw, or thought he saw, in that annual assembly the working of principles unfavourable to that strict Churchmanship which he believed to be essential to the continuance of that revival of religion which had long been in progress ; and hence he poured forth the feelings of his mind in the following stanzas. They are said to have been “written after the Conference in August, 1780: the last which the writer was present at.” It will be observed that he attended about as many “last Conferences” as the good Richard Baxter uttered and published “last words.”

Why should I longer, Lord, contend,
My last important moments spend
In buffeting the air ?
In warning those who will not see,
But rest in blind security,
And rush into the snare ?

Prophet of ills why should I live,
Or by my sad forebodings grieve
Whom I can serve no more ?
I only can their loss bewail,
Till life's exhausted sorrows fail,
And the last pang is o'er.

Here then I quietly resign
Into those gracious hands divine,
Whom I received from thee,
My brethren and companions dear,
And finish with a parting tear
My useless ministry.

Detach'd from every creature now,
I humbly at thy footstool bow,
Accepting my release ;
If thou the promised grace bestow,
Salvation to thy servant show,
And bid me die in peace.

To this tone of sadness and despondency the cheerful buoyancy of Mr. John Wesley formed a perfect and beautiful contrast. Speaking in his Journal of this Conference, he

says, "We have always been hitherto straitened for time. It was now resolved for the future we will allow nine or ten days for each Conference ; that everything relative to the carrying on of the work of God may be maturely considered." On the ninth day after their assembling, he says, "We concluded the Conference in much peace and love." Charles retired from the Conference to weep, and John to rejoice. One was full of constitutional fear, the other of gracious hope. Charles's gloom was doubtless increased by disease. His sufferings at this time were great, and his symptoms alarming. For a considerable time he was under a necessity of living upon dry toast. While he was in a very uncertain state of health, suspended between life and death, he said, in a letter to his eldest son, "My father I have heard say, God had shown him he should have all his nineteen children about him in heaven. I have the same blessed hope for my eight. His blessing be upon you all !"

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF the eight children whom Mrs. Wesley presented to her husband, and whom he declared his earnest expectation of meeting in heaven, five died in their infancy. The other three survived both their parents. The bereaved mother sacredly preserved a lock of hair belonging to each of those who were taken to an early rest. These touching relics, all neatly folded up, and labelled by herself, lie before the writer of this narrative.

John, their first-born, concerning whom some notices have been already given, died of the small-pox, Jan. 7th, 1753-4, aged one year, four months, and seventeen days.

Martha Maria died on Friday, July 25th, 1755, aged one month and two days.

Susanna, so called after her honoured grandmother, the wife of the Rector of Epworth, died on Easter-Sunday, April 11th, 1761, aged eleven months.

Selina, who doubtless received her name from respect for the Countess of Huntingdon, died Oct. 11th, 1764, aged five weeks.

John James died on Tuesday, July 5th, 1768, aged seven months.

When this fifth death among her children occurred, Mrs. Wesley was deeply distressed, and earnestly besought the Lord, if it were his will, that she might be spared the pain of following another of them to the grave. Her request was granted, and her sons Charles and Samuel, with her daughter Sarah, who were then young, lived to a good old age.

The sons are well known to have been eminently distinguished by musical genius and talent, the early developement of which excited general surprise. Their father watched with deep interest the bent and capabilities of their minds, and kept notes of their boyish history, which he placed in the hands of the Honourable Daines Barrington, a friend of the family; who published the account in his quarto volume of

“Miscellanies,” in the year 1781. The following notices are copied from Mr. Charles Wesley’s private papers, which contain several particulars that were never before published :—

“Charles was born at Bristol, Dec. 11th, 1757. He was two years and three quarters old when I first observed his strong inclination to music. He then surprised me by playing a tune on the harpsichord, readily, and in just time. Soon after he played several, whatever his mother sung, or whatever he heard in the streets.

“From his birth she used to quiet and amuse him with the harpsichord ; but he would not suffer her to play with one hand only, taking the other, and putting it to the keys, before he could speak. When he played himself she used to tie him up by his back-string to the chair, for fear of his falling. Whatever tune it was, he always put a true bass to it. From the beginning he played without study or hesitation, and, as the masters told me, perfectly well.

“Mr. Broadrip, organist at Bristol, heard him in petticoats, and foretold he would one day make a great player.

“Whenever he was called to play to a stranger, he would ask, in a word of his own, ‘Is he a musicker?’ and if answered, ‘Yes,’ he played with the greatest readiness.

“He always played with spirit. There was something in his manner above a child, which struck the hearers, learned or unlearned.

“At four years old I carried him with me to London. Mr. Beard was the first that confirmed Mr. Broadrip’s judgment of him, and kindly offered his interest with Dr. Boyce, to get him admitted among the King’s boys. But I had then no thoughts of bringing him up a musician.

“A gentleman carried him next to Mr. Stanley, who expressed much pleasure and surprise at hearing him, and declared he had never met one of his age with so strong a propensity to music. The gentleman told us, he never before believed what Handel used to tell him of himself, and his own love of music, in his childhood.

“Mr. Madan presented my son to Mr. Worgan, who was extremely kind, and, as I then thought, partial to him. He told us, he would prove an eminent master, if he was not taken off by other studies. Mr. Worgan frequently entertained him with the harpsichord. Charles was greatly taken

with his bold, full manner of playing, and seemed even then to catch a spark of his fire.

“At our return to Bristol we left him to ramble on till he was near six: then we gave him Mr. Rooke for a master: a man of no name, but very good-natured, who let him run on *ad libitum*, whilst he sat by, more to observe than to control him.

“Mr. Rogers, the oldest organist in Bristol, was one of his first friends. He often set him on his knee, and made him play to him, declaring he was more delighted in hearing him than himself.

“I always saw the importance (if he was to be a musician) of placing him under the best master that could be got, and also one who was an admirer of Handel; as my son preferred him to all the world. But I saw no likelihood of my being able to procure him the first master, as well as the most excellent music, and other necessary means of acquiring so costly an art.

“I think it was at our next journey to London, that Lady Gertrude Hotham heard him with much satisfaction, and made him a present of all her music. Mrs. Rich had before given him Handel’s songs, and Mr. Beard, Purcell’s, with Scarlatti’s Lessons. Sir Charles Hotham was particularly kind, promised him an organ, and that he should never want any means or encouragement in his art. But he went abroad soon after, and was thence translated to the heavenly country.

“With him Charles lost all hope and prospect of a patron and benefactor. Nevertheless he went on, with the assistance of nature only, and his two favourite authors, Handel and Corelli, till he was ten years old. Then Mr. Rogers told me, ‘it was high time to put him in trammels;’ and soon after, Mr. Granville, at Bath, an old friend of Handel, sent for him. After hearing him play, he charged him to have nothing to do with any great master, ‘who will utterly spoil you,’ he added, ‘and destroy anything that is original in you. Study Handel’s Lessons, till perfect in them. The only man in London who *can* teach you them is Kelway; but he *will* not, neither for love nor money.’

“Soon after we went up to town. Charles, notwithstanding Mr. Granville’s caution, had a strong curiosity to hear

the principal masters there. I wanted their judgment and advice for him. Through Mr. Bromfield's recommendation, he first heard Mr. Keeble, (a great harmonist and lover of Handel,) and his favourite pupil, Mr. Burton. Then he played to them. Mr. Burton said, he had a very brilliant finger: Mr. Keeble, that he ought to be encouraged by all lovers of music; yet he must not expect it, because he was not born in Italy. He advised him to pursue his studies in Latin, &c., till fourteen, and then apply himself in earnest to harmony.

"Mr. Arnold treated him with great affection; said he would soon surpass the professors; and advised him not to confine himself to any one author, or style, but to study and adopt what was excellent in all.

"Dr. Arne's counsel was the same with Mr. Keeble's: to stay till he was fourteen, and then give himself up to the strictest master he could get.

"Vinto confessed that he wanted nothing but an Italian master.

"G——, urged by Mr. Madan, at last acknowledged that 'the boy played well,' and was for sending him to Bologna, or Paris, for education!

"They all agreed in this, that he was marked by nature for a musician, and ought to cultivate his talent. Yet still I mistrusted them, as well as myself, till Mr. Bromfield carried us to Mr. Kelway. His judgment was decisive, and expressed in more than words; for he invited Charles to come to him, whenever he was in London, and promised to *give* him all the assistance in his power.

"He began with teaching him Handel's Lessons; then his own Sonatas, and Scarlatti, and Geminiani. For near two years he instructed him gratis, and with such commendations as are not fit for me to repeat.

"Mr. Worgan continued his kindness. He often played, and sang over to him, whole oratorios. So did Mr. Battishil. Mr. Kelway played over the Messiah, on purpose to teach him the time and manner of Handel. He received great encouragement from Mr. Savage. Mr. Arnold was another father to him. Mr. Worgan gave him many lessons in thorough-bass, and composition. Mr. Smith's curiosity drew him to Mr. Kelway's, to hear his scholar, whom he bade go

on, and prosper, under the best of masters. Dr. Boyce came several times to my house to hear him ; gave him some of his own music ; asked, if the King had heard him, and expressed much surprise when we told him no.

“ My brother enriched him with an inestimable present of Dr. Boyce’s three volumes of cathedral music.

“ It now evidently appeared that his particular bent was to church music. Other music he could take pleasure in, (especially what was truly excellent in Italian,) and played it without any trouble ; but his chief delight was in oratorios. These he played over and over from the score, till he had them by heart, as well as the rest of Handel’s music, and Corelli, and Scarlatti, and Geminiani.

“ These two years he has spent with his four classical authors, and in composition. Mr. Kelway has made him a player ; but he knows the difference betwixt that and a musician ; and can never think himself the latter till he is master of thorough-bass.

“ Several have offered to teach it him ; but as I waited, and deferred his instruction in the practical part, till I could get the very best instructor for him, so I keep him back from the theory. The only man to teach him that, and sacred music, he believes to be Dr. Boyce.”

Of Charles’s aptitude for learning, some idea may be formed from the remarks of Mr. Kelway, uttered from time to time, while he observed the skill and proficiency of his pupil. The following are selected from several others which occur in the father’s notes. They were taken when Charles was about twelve years of age.

“ I never saw one carry his hand so well. It is quite a picture. It is a gift from God. How would Handel have shaken his sides, if he could have heard him ! ”

“ You will be an honour to me. Handel’s hands did not lie on the instrument better than yours do.”

“ Were you my own son, I could not love you better. Go on, and mind none of the musicians, but Handel. You have a divine gift.” “ One cannot hear him play four bars without knowing him to be a genius.”

“ I will maintain, before all the world, that there is not a master in London that can play this sonata as he does. The King would eat up this boy. I must carry him some morn-

ing to St. James's." "His very soul is harmony. Not one of my scholars could have learned that in a year, which you have learned in ten lessons."

"He treats me with my own music. I wish Handel and Geminiani were now alive: they would be in raptures at hearing him! Never have I heard any man play with such feeling!"

"The King has asked after him again. I told His Majesty, he had learned more in four months than any other would in four years. He asked me, if he intended to make music his profession. I answered, no; and that he did not want anything, &c."

"I loved music when young; but not so well as he does. One would think he had been the composer of this. He gives the colouring; the nice touches, the finishing strokes, are all his own. I love him better and better. He has it from God. He is a heaven-born child. This boy consoles me. He raises my spirits whenever I hear him. He has more taste and feeling than all our band. What colouring! What lights and shades! I could *cry* to hear him."

"He is an old man at the instrument. He is not a boy. He is the greatest genius in music I have ever met with."

"They say I cannot communicate my skill: but I dare maintain, there is not such another player as this boy in England; nor yet in France, or Spain, or Italy."

Mr. Charles Wesley adds, "I carried Mr. Russell, the painter, to Mr. Kelway's. He told me afterwards, that he knew the finest passages by the change of Charles's colour. I have seen the tears run down Mr. Kelway's cheeks while Charles was playing out of Handel's lessons. 'If I was without the door,' said he, 'and did not know he was dead, I should swear it was Handel himself that played.'"

When Charles was about nineteen years of age, the father wrote the following particulars respecting him:—"As I am no judge of music myself, I cannot answer for the justness of Mr. Kelway's sentiments concerning the art and its professors. Much less do I subscribe to his high opinion of his pupil. Mr. Kelway's sincerity I do not doubt. His judgment also is unquestionable. Yet he might be under a secret bias. He had lately published his Sonatas. They were ill

received, and even decried, by the masters in general. Charles very highly esteemed them, as next to Handel and Geminiani. This naturally prejudiced Mr. Kelway in his favour, and accounts in some measure for his violent encomiums. I do not yet perceive that Charles is hurt, either by Mr. Kelway's praises or prejudices.

“ Charles has now been some years under Dr. Boyce's tuition, learning composition, and hopes to continue learning as long as the Doctor lives. At the same time he retains the most grateful veneration for his old master, Mr. Kelway, and played to him, while he was able to hear him, every week. He believes he has the two greatest masters in Christendom. Dr. Boyce and he seem equally satisfied. I hope he has caught a little of his master's temper, as well as his skill. A more modest man than Dr. Boyce I have never known. I never heard him speak a vain or ill-natured word, either to exalt himself, or to depreciate another.”

This was written in the year 1777; and early in 1779 Dr. Boyce died. The eulogium which Mr. Charles Wesley here passes upon the character of that very celebrated musician, he afterwards repeated, and even strengthened, in the following fine ode on the Doctor's death, which the poet's son, the grateful pupil of the deceased, set to music :—

Father of harmony, farewell !
 Farewell for a few fleeting years !
 Translated from the mournful vale ;
 Jehovah's flaming ministers
 Have borne thee to thy place above,
 Where all is harmony and love.

Thy generous, good, and upright heart,
 That sigh'd for a celestial lyre,
 Was tuned on earth to bear a part
 Symphonious with that warbling quire,
 Where Handel strikes the golden strings,
 And plausive angels clap their wings.

Handel, and all the tuneful train,
 Who well employ'd their art divine,
 To' announce the great Messiah's reign,
 In joyful acclamations join,
 And springing from their azure seat,
 With shouts their new-born brother meet.

Thy brow a radiant circle wears,
Thy hands a seraph's harp receives,
And, singing with the morning stars,
Thy soul in endless rapture lives,
And hymns on the eternal throne
Jehovah and his conquering Son.

It is worthy of remark, that in this beautiful ode Mr. Charles Wesley places Handel in heaven, among the glorified worshippers before the throne of God. Considering the nature of his religious principles, it is not likely that he would do this merely because of Handel's musical genius. A secular poet would not indeed hesitate to take such a liberty ; but this was not the manner of Charles Wesley, who was deeply impressed with the solemn truth, that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." With this truth he never trifled, in compliment to any man. There is therefore reason to believe that he had more satisfactory ground to hope for Handel's salvation, than the poetic one, that he had composed the sublime oratorio of "The Messiah." Handel is well known to have been, not indeed an infidel, but ungodly and profane. When irritated, he was accustomed to express the violence of his passion by swearing in three different languages. But during the last few years of his life it is said that he was greatly changed in his spirit, and became a regular attendant upon the public worship of God, in which he showed by his gestures the depth of his feelings. When he quarrelled with the parties connected with the Opera-house, he was accommodated by Mr. Rich with the use of the theatre in Covent-garden, for the performance of his oratorios. Mrs. Rich, as we have seen, was one of Mr. Charles Wesley's most attached friends ; and it is highly probable that he met the gifted author of the "Messiah" at her house in Chelsea. The supposition is strengthened by the fact, that three of his hymns were set to music by Handel, and still exist in the handwriting of this great musician, in the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge. These noble melodies were published a few years ago by Mr. Samuel Wesley, by whom they were discovered. Handel died in London on Good-Friday, in the year 1759.

Mr. Charles Wesley's second surviving son was also trained to music as a profession. If he did not excite so much attention in very early life as a performer, when a mere boy

he surpassed Charles in musical composition. In this his precocity was wonderful. The following is the father's own account of this surprising genius:—

“Samuel was born on St. Matthias's day, Feb. 24th, 1766, the same day which gave birth to Handel, eighty-two years before. The seeds of harmony did not spring up quite so early as in his brother; for he was three years old before he aimed at a tune. His first were, ‘God save great George our King,’ Fischer's Minuet, and such like, picked up from the street organs. He did not put a true bass to them till he had learned his notes.

“While his brother was playing, he used to stand by with his childish fiddle, scraping, and beating time. One observing him, asked me, ‘And what shall this boy do?’ I answered, ‘Mend his brother's pens.’ But he did not resent the affront as deeply as Marcello did: * so it was not indignation which made him a musician.

“Mr. Arnold was the first who, hearing him at the harpsichord, said, ‘I set down Sam for one of my family.’ But we did not much regard him, coming after his brother, or suspect that the block contained a statue.

“The first thing that drew our attention was, the great delight he took in hearing his brother play. Whenever Mr. Kelway came to teach him, Sam constantly attended, and accompanied Charles on the chair. Undaunted by Mr. Kelway's frown, he went on; and even when his back was to the harpsichord, he crossed his hands on the chair, as the other did on the instrument, without ever missing a time.

“He was so passionately fond of Scarlatti, that if Charles ever began playing him before Sam was called, he would cry and roar as if he had been beaten. Mr. Madan, his god-

* “Alessandro Marcello dwelt at Venice; he had a musical academy in his house, held on a certain day in every week. It once happened that the Princes of Brunswick were there, who, being invited to a musical performance in the academy, took particular notice of Benedetto, at that time very young; and, among other questions, asked him, in the hearing of his brother, what were the studies that most engaged his attention. ‘O,’ said his brother, ‘he is a very useful little fellow to me. He fetches my books and papers: the *fittest employment* for such a one as he is.’ The boy was nettled at this answer, which reflected so much upon his supposed want of genius. He therefore applied himself to music and poetry.”—Dictionary of Musicians.

father, finding him one day so belabouring his chair, told him he should have a better instrument by and by.

“ I have since recollected Mr. Kelway’s words, ‘ It is of the utmost importance to a learner, to hear the best music ; ’ and, ‘ If any man would learn to play well, let him hear Charles.’ Sam had this double advantage from his birth. As his brother employed the evenings in Handel’s Oratorios, Sam was always at his elbow, listening, and joining with his voice. Nay, he would sometimes presume to find fault with his brother’s play, when we thought he could know nothing of the matter.

“ He was between four and five years old when he got hold of the Oratorio of Samson, and by that alone taught himself to read. Soon after he taught himself to write. From this time he sprung up like a mushroom ; and when turned of five could read perfectly well ; and had all the airs, recitations, and choruses of Samson and the Messiah, both words and notes, by heart.

“ Whenever he heard his brother begin to play, he would tell us whose music it was, whether Handel, Corelli, Scarlatti, or any other, and what part of what lesson, sonata, overture, &c.

“ Before he could write he composed much music. His custom was to lay the words of an Oratorio before him, and sing them all over. Thus he set (extempore for the most part) Ruth, Gideon, Manasses, or the Death of Abel. We observed when he repeated the same words, it was always to the same tunes. The airs of Ruth, in particular, he made before he was six years old ; laid them up in his memory till he was eight ; and then wrote them down.

“ I have seen him open the Prayer-book, and sing the Te Deum, or an anthem from some psalm, to his own music, accompanying it with the harpsichord. This he often did, after he had learned his notes, which Mr. Williams, a young organist of Bristol, taught him betwixt six and seven.

“ How or when he learned counterpoint I can hardly tell : but without being ever taught it, he soon wrote in parts.

“ He was full eight years old when Dr. Boyce came to see us, and accosted me with, ‘ Sir, I hear you have got an English Mozart in your house. Young Linley tells me wonderful things of him.’ I called Sam to answer for himself.

He had by this time scrawled down his Oratorio of Ruth. The Doctor looked over it very carefully, and seemed highly pleased with the performance. Some of his words were, ‘These airs are some of the prettiest I have seen. This boy writes by nature as true a bass, as I by rule and study. There is no man in England has two such sons as you.’ He bade us let him run on *ad libitum*, without any check of rules or masters.

“After this, whenever the Doctor visited us, Sam ran to him with his song, sonata, or anthem, and the Doctor examined them with astonishing patience and delight.

“As soon as Sam had quite finished his Oratorio, he sent it as a present to the Doctor, who immediately honoured him with the following note:—‘Dr. Boyce’s compliments and thanks to his very ingenious brother-composer, Mr. Samuel Wesley, and is very much pleased and obliged by the possession of the Oratorio of Ruth, which he shall preserve with the utmost care, as the most curious product of his musical library.’

“For the short time that Sam continued under Mr. Williams, it was hard to say which was the master, and which the scholar. Sam chose what music he would learn; made his master learn the violoncello, to accompany him; and often broke out into extempore play, his master wisely letting him do as he pleased.

“During this time he taught himself the fiddle. A soldier assisted him about six weeks, and, some time after, Mr. Kingsbury gave him twenty lessons. His favourite instrument was the organ.

“He spent a month at Bath, while we were in Wales; served the Abbey on Sundays; gave them several voluntaries; and played the first fiddle in several private concerts.

“He returned with us to London, greatly improved in his play. There I allowed him a month for learning all Handel’s Overtures. He got and played them over to me in three days. Handel’s Concertos he mastered with equal ease, and some of his lessons, and Scarlatti’s. Like Charles, he learned the hardest music without any pains or difficulty.

“He borrowed his Ruth to transcribe for Mr. Madan. Parts of it he played at Lord Le Despencer’s, who rewarded him with some of Handel’s Oratorios.

“Mr. Madan now began carrying him about to his musical friends. He played several times at Mr. Wilmot’s, to the nobility, and some eminent masters and judges of music. They gave him music to play, and subjects to pursue, which he had never seen. Mr. Burton, Mr. Bates, &c., expressed their approbation in the strongest terms. His extempore fugues, they said, were just and regular; but they could not believe that he knew nothing of the rules of composition.

“Several companies he entertained for hours together with his own music. As quick as his invention suggested, his hand executed it. The learned were astonished. Sir John Hawkins cried out, ‘Inspiration! inspiration!’ Dr. C—— candidly acknowledged, ‘He has got that which we are searching after.’ An old musical gentleman, hearing him, could not refrain from tears.

“Dr. Burney was greatly pleased with his extempore play, and pursuing the subjects and fugues which he gave him; but insisted, like the rest, that he must have been taught the rules. Mr. Stanley and Mr. Burney expressed the same surprise and satisfaction. An organist gave him a sonata he had just written, not easy, or very legible. Sam played it with the greatest readiness and propriety, and better (as the composer owned to Mr. Madan) than he could himself.

“Lord Barrington, Lord Aylsford, Lord Dudley, Sir Watkin Wynne, and other lovers of Handel, were highly delighted with him, and encouraged him to hold fast his veneration for Handel, and the old music. But old or new was all one to Sam, so it was but good. Whatever was presented, he played at sight, and made variations on any tune: and as often as he played it again made new variations. He imitated every author’s style, whether Handel, Bachschobert, or Scarlatti himself.

“One asked him how he liked Mozart’s music. He played it over, and said, ‘It is very well for one—of *his years*.’

“He went and played to Mr. Kelway, whom I afterwards asked what he thought of him. He would not allow him to be comparable to Charles; yet commended him greatly, and told his mother, it was a gift from God to both her sons; and as for Sam, he never saw so free and *degagé* a gentleman. Mr. Madan had often said the same, that Sam was everywhere as much admired for his behaviour as for his play.

“Between eight and nine he was brought through the small-pox, by Mr. Bromfield’s assistance, whom he therefore promised to reward with his next Oratorio.

“If he loved anything better than music, it was regularity. Nothing could exceed his punctuality. No company, no persuasion could keep him up beyond his time. He never could be prevailed upon to hear any opera or concert by night. The moment the clock gave warning for eight, away ran Sam in the midst of his most favourite music. Once he rose up after the first part of the Messiah, with, ‘Come, mamma, let us go home; or I sha’nt be in bed by eight.’

“When some talked of carrying him to the Queen, and, to try him, asked if he was willing to go: ‘Yes, with all my heart,’ he answered; ‘but I won’t stay beyond eight.’

“The praises bestowed so lavishly on him did not seem to affect, much less to hurt, him; and whenever he went into the company of his betters, he would much rather have stayed at home. Yet when among them, he was free and easy; so that some remarked, he behaved as one bred up in a court, yet without a courtier’s servility.

“On our coming to town this last time, he sent to Dr. Boyce the last anthem he had made. The Doctor thought, from its correctness, that Charles must have helped him in it. But Charles assured him, that he never assisted him otherwise than by telling him, if he asked, whether such or such a passage were good harmony: and the Doctor was so scrupulous, that when Charles showed him an improper note, he would not suffer it to be altered.

“Mr. Madan now carried him to more of the first masters. Mr. Abel wrote him a subject, and declared, ‘Not three masters in town could have answered it so well.’

“Mr. Cramer took a great liking to him; offered to teach him the fiddle; and played some trios with his brother and him. He sent a man to take measure of him for a fiddle, and is confident a few lessons would set him up for a violinist.

“Sam often played the second fiddle, and sometimes the first, with Mr. Tradway, who declared, ‘Giardini himself could not play with greater exactness.’

“Mr. Madan brought Dr. Nares to my house; who could not believe that a boy should write an Oratorio, play at sight,

and pursue any given subject. He brought two of the King's boys, who sung over several songs and choruses in Ruth. Then he produced two bars of a fugue. Sam worked this very readily and well, adding a movement of his own, and then a voluntary on the organ, which quite removed the Doctor's incredulity.

"At the rehearsal at St. Paul's, Dr. Boyce met *his brother* Sam; and, showing him to Dr. Howard, told him, 'This boy will soon surpass you all.' Shortly after, he came to see us; took up a Jubilate which Sam had lately written; and commended it as one of Charles's. When we told him whose it was, he declared, he could find no fault in it: adding, there was not another boy upon earth who could have composed it; and concluding with, 'I never yet met with that person who owes so much to nature as Sam. He comes among us, dropped down from heaven!'

"Mr. Smith, who assisted Handel in managing the Oratorios, gave Sam two bars of a fugue, composed for the organ, which Sam, though at the harpsichord, treated as a movement for the organ; and when he had worked it in a masterly manner for some time, fell into a second movement, which so naturally arose out of the former, that Mr. Smith recognised his own notes, adding at the same time, that composers were not, from this instance, to be hastily charged with plagiarism.

"Some months before this, Mr. Baumgarden gave him the subject of a fugue, which Sam pursued a considerable time on the organ. Mr. Baumgarden declared it was almost note for note the same with a fugue which he had written, and never showed to any one. He inferred from hence, that his train of ideas and Sam's were very similar. He has since declared that he verily believed there was not in Europe such an extempore player as Sam."

In addition to this narrative, which was written by Mr. Charles Wesley, and may by some persons be suspected of a father's partiality, the following notices concerning the juvenile musician are selected from the account published by the Hon. Daines Barrington. They fully confirm the statements of the father.

"I first had an opportunity of being witness of Master Samuel Wesley's great musical talents at the latter end of 1775, when he was nearly ten years old. To speak of him

first as a performer on the harpsichord, he was then able to execute the most difficult lessons for the instrument at sight; for his fingers never wanted the guidance of the eye in the most rapid and desultory passages. But he not only did ample justice to the composition in neatness and precision, but entered into its true taste, which may be easily believed by the numbers who have heard him play extemporary lessons in the style of the eminent masters.

“He not only executed crabbed compositions thus at sight, but was equally ready to transpose into any keys, even a fourth; and if it was a sonata for two trebles and a bass, the part of the first treble being set before him, he would immediately add an extemporary bass and second treble to it.

“Having happened to mention this readiness in the boy to Bremner, (the printer of music in the Strand,) he told me that he had some lessons which were supposed to have been composed for Queen Elizabeth, but which none of the harpsichord masters could execute, and would consequently gravel the young performer. I, however, desired that he would let me carry one of these compositions to him, by way of trial, which he accordingly did, when the boy immediately placed it upon his desk, and was sitting down to play it; but I stopped him by mentioning the difficulties he would soon encounter, and that therefore he must cast his eye over the music before he made the attempt.

“Having done this very rapidly, (for he is a devourer of a score, and conceives at once the effect of the different parts,) he said that Bremner was in the right; for that there were two or three passages which he could not play at sight, as they were so queer and awkward, but that he had no notion of not trying; and though he boggled at those parts of the lesson, he executed them cleanly at the second practice.

“I then asked him how he approved of the composition: to which he answered, ‘Not at all,’ though he might differ from a Queen; and that attention had not been paid to some of the established rules. He then pointed out the particular passages to which he objected; and I stated them to Bremner, who allowed that the boy was right; but that some of the great composers had occasionally taken the same liberties.

“The next time I saw Master Wesley, I mentioned Bremner’s defence of what he had blamed; on which he immediately answered, that when such excellent rules were broken, the composer should take care that these licences produced a good effect: whereas these passages had a very bad one. I need not dwell on the great penetration, acuteness, and judgment of this answer. Lord Mornington, indeed, who has so deep a knowledge of music, has frequently told me, that he always wished to consult Master Wesley upon any difficulty in composition; as he knew no one who gave so immediate and satisfactory information.

“Though he was always willing to play the compositions of others, yet for the most part he amused himself with extemporary effusions of his own most extraordinary musical inspiration, which unfortunately were forgotten in a few minutes: whereas his memory was most tenacious of what had been published by others.

“His invention in varying passages was inexhaustible. I have myself heard him give more than fifty variations on a known pleasing melody, all of which were not only different from each other, but showed excellent taste and judgment. This infinite variety probably arose from his having played so much extempore, in which he gave full scope to every flight of his imagination, and produced passages which I never heard from any other performer upon the harpsichord.

“He was desired to compose a march for one of the regiments of Guards; which he did to the approbation of all who ever heard it; and a distinguished officer of the royal navy declared that it was a movement which would probably inspire steady and serene courage when the enemy was approaching.

“As I thought the boy would like to hear this march performed, I carried him to the parade at the proper time, when it had the honour of beginning the military concert. The piece being finished, I asked him whether it was executed to his satisfaction: to which he replied, ‘By no means;’ and I then immediately introduced him to the band, which consisted of very tall and stout musicians, that he might set them right. On this Sam immediately told them, that they had not done justice to his composition. To which they answered the urchin, with both astonishment and

contempt, ‘*Your composition!*’ Sam, however, replied, with great serenity, ‘*Yes, my composition!*’ which I confirmed. They then stared, and severally made their excuses, by protesting that they had copied accurately from the manuscript which had been put into their hands. This he most readily allowed to the hautboys and basoons, but said the French horns were in fault; who, making the same defence, he insisted upon the original score being produced, and, showing them their mistake, ordered the march to be played again, which they submitted to with as much deference as they would have shown to Handel.”

With these facts before him, it is not surprising that Mr. Charles Wesley should resolve to devote his sons to music as a profession. Their propensity to the science was strong; their talent and genius were unquestionable; so that both in composition and practice they appeared to the greatest advantage. While they were mere children, the most competent judges spoke of them in language of admiration, and in some cases even wept for joy, on witnessing their extraordinary powers. And yet in forming his determination, we may be allowed to doubt whether the father really took that comprehensive view of the subject which its importance demanded. Noble as is the science, and capable of being applied to the most beneficial purposes, it rarely secures the requisite remuneration for the time and mental ability expended upon it. As a handmaid to devotion, when it is suitably used, it cannot be too highly commended; but in Protestant countries, the science, especially in its recondite branches, is more frequently employed as a means of mere amusement, than as a help in divine worship. Men of genius, therefore, who practise music as a means of subsistence, must often expect to pine in want, unless they will apply their powers to the gratification of the worldly and irreligious, or stoop to the drudgery of private tuition. With regard to his younger son, Mr. Charles Wesley at length found that the profession to which he was destined led to results of a painful nature. But the discovery was not fully made till it was too late to retrace the steps which had been taken.

Mr. Charles Wesley’s sons, though one in their love of music, and equally successful in the cultivation of it, were very different in their personal character. Charles enjoyed

the advantages of a classical education, being regularly trained in a school at Bristol; but he appears to have been incapable of excelling in anything except music, in reference to which he was all but inspired. He was affable, kind, good-humoured, and easy; buried in music; vain of his abilities in the science, to which his knowledge was in a great measure limited. His conversation consisted chiefly of anecdotes which he had collected in the course of his professional engagements. In his manners he had all the ease and elegance of a courtier; but it is doubtful whether, through the entire course of his life, he was able to dress himself without assistance. If left to himself, he was almost sure to appear with his wig on one side, his waistcoat buttoned awry, or the knot of his cravat opposite one of his shoulders. His morals were correct, and his respect for his parents most tender and reverent; but in early life his mind was not deeply impressed with the solemn truths of religion.

Samuel, on the other hand, was possessed of great intellectual power and acuteness. His mind was truly Wesleyan: quick, shrewd, and penetrating. He was mostly educated by his father, especially in Latin. His knowledge was extensive; his conversation elegant, agreeable, instructive, and varied; and he was capable of excelling in any science or profession to which he might apply himself. Yet his natural disposition was not so harmless and kindly as that of Charles; nor did he cherish that deep filial affection by which his brother was always distinguished. The father's principal concern respecting Charles was, that he did not give his heart to God. Samuel, even in his youth, showed a waywardness of temper, that cost his father many a pang of sorrow, which he expressed in pious and energetic verse.

When these young gentlemen had acquired a superior proficiency in music, and celebrity in various quarters, they attempted to turn their attainments to some practical account, by beginning a series of select concerts, which they continued for several years in a large room, fitted up for that purpose in the house of their father, in Chesterfield-street, St. Mary-le-bone. The first was held in the year 1779. The price of a ticket for each course was three guineas. The regular subscribers varied in number from thirty to upwards of fifty; but several persons attended them occasionally, who

did not subscribe to an entire course, so that the room, which held about eighty persons, was usually crowded. Considerable sums of money were in this way obtained; but the expense of providing performers, refreshments, attendants, &c., was a heavy tax upon the receipts, so that the profits were but small.

Among the regular and more distinguished subscribers to these concerts were the Bishop of London, Lord Dartmouth, Lord Barrington, Lord and Lady Le Despencer, the Honourable Daines Barrington, the Danish and Saxon Ambassadors, Dr. Shepherd, Mr. Madan, and several others, both clerical and lay.

The Earl of Mornington was not only a constant attendant upon these concerts, but also a frequent performer upon the violin. For some years he breakfasted weekly with the family of Mr. Charles Wesley, and spent much time with the two sons, practising upon different instruments, and conversing on subjects connected with their favourite study. He used to carry his violin under his coat, as he passed along the street, and often remarked to his friends the Wesleys, that he should never be ashamed to be mistaken for a professional teacher of music. This nobleman of elegant taste and polished manners, whose skill in musical science rivalled that of his friends the young Wesleys, took little interest in politics, and still less in military exploits.

There was another personage of distinction who attended these concerts, and is entitled to especial notice: the venerable General Oglethorpe, with whom the colony of Georgia had its origin, and under whose patronage John and Charles Wesley had gone to that settlement forty-five years before. He was now considerably more than eighty years old, but retained his faculties in surprising freshness and vigour. He was at this time a friend and companion of Dr. Johnson; and probably attended the concerts from a feeling of regard for the father of the youthful musicians, who had been his Secretary in a distant land, and who had not always been treated by him with that generous confidence to which he was entitled by his fidelity. It is said that the aged General, about this time, meeting with Mr. John Wesley, kissed his hand, and showed him every mark of profound respect. He could not be less impressed in favour of Charles, who had stood in a

nearer relation to him, and whose pious integrity he had invariably witnessed.

It is at once instructive and gratifying to find, that while the musical genius of his sons drew many strangers to his house, Mr. Charles Wesley felt his responsibility to God for the people who were so unexpectedly brought within the range of his influence. He was not merely the gratified father of two youthful musicians, who were universally admired, but also the faithful Minister of Christ, who was entrusted with a message of truth and mercy, which he was to deliver "in season, and out of season." Two examples of his faithfulness may be properly mentioned in this place. In the latter end of the year 1776, Mr. Kelway, who was far advanced in life, had a dangerous illness; and when he was partially recovered, Mr. Charles Wesley addressed to him the following affectionate letter:—

"Nov. 23d. Dear Sir,—The joy I felt at seeing you on Monday somewhat resembled the joy we shall feel when we meet again without our bodies. Most heartily do I thank God that He has given you a longer continuance among us, and I trust a resolution to improve your few last precious moments. *We* must confess, at *our* time of life, that ONE THING is needful, even to get ready for our unchangeable, eternal state. What is that readiness, or meetness? You are convinced of my sincere love for your soul; and therefore allow me the liberty of a friend. As such I write, not to teach you what you do not know; but to stir up your mind by way of remembrance, and exhort both you and myself:

‘Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.’

"When God came down from heaven, to show us the way thither, you remember his first words: 'The kingdom of God is at hand: *repent* ye, and *believe* the Gospel.' He himself declares, 'The kingdom of God is within you;' even 'righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;' and assures us, every one who seeks, finds it; every one that asks, receives it.

"Him hath God exalted to give both repentance and remission of sins. Faith also is the gift of God, through Jesus Christ, its author and finisher.

“The true repentance is better felt than described. It surely implies a troubled and wounded spirit, a broken and contrite heart. It is what the publican felt, when he could only cry, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner;’ what Peter felt when Jesus turned and *looked* on him; and what the trembling jailer felt when he asked, ‘What must I do to be saved?’

“By this brokenness of heart our Saviour prepares us for divine faith, and present pardon sealed upon the heart in PEACE which passes all understanding; in joy unspeakable, and full of glory; and in love which casts out the love of sin, especially our bosom sin, our ruling passion, whether the love of pleasure, of praise, or of money.

“Now, my dear Sir, this meetness for heaven is what I must earnestly wish you and myself, even repentance, faith, and love. And all things are now ready for you. One look of Jesus Christ can break your heart this moment, and bind it up by faith and pardoning love. One day is with Him as a thousand years: and He is still the Man who receiveth sinners, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

“‘I will pardon those whom I reserve,’ is his promise; and for this gracious end He has reserved you, and has held your soul in life for above seventy years. For this end He has delivered you in innumerable evils; blessed you with innumerable blessings; and for this end, I humbly hope, his providence brought you acquainted with, dear Sir,

“The faithful servant and friend of your soul.”

Mr. Charles Wesley did not confine his regards merely to professional men, and such as might consider themselves his equals. The Earl of Mornington shared in his kind and Christian concern. He addressed to that nobleman a letter of spiritual advice, to which he received the following answer. Every document that casts light upon the history of the Wellesley family must be interesting to Englishmen. This letter shows that the father of the Duke of Wellington was a sincere believer in the Gospel, and had a deep sense of the fear of God. While he admired the musical genius of the two younger Wesleys, he set a high value upon the friendship of their devout father, which he regarded as an advantage conferred upon him by divine Providence. The letter is indorsed by Mr. Charles Wesley, “Serious Lord Mornington.”

“Duke-street, Portland-square, Sept. 9th, 1778. I should have much sooner acknowledged the receipt of my dear and worthy friend’s kind letter, had I not been much engaged in business, occasioned by the perplexed state of affairs in Ireland. I entirely agree with you, that there was something very singular and uncommon in the manner by which we were made acquainted with each other; and the more I consider it, the more I am persuaded that there was the interposition of a superior power to that of man in it. I can with truth say that I esteem the commencement of your acquaintance as one of the happiest moments of my life; and hope, with the blessing of God, to merit in some degree the too partial opinion I am afraid you have conceived of me.

“Indeed you do me but justice in believing me to be a servant of God, though a most unworthy one; and if I can plead the smallest degree of merit, it is that I have a true sense of my own unworthiness. Blessed with a most upright and religious parent in my father, (for my mother died when I was four years of age,) I was early instructed in my duty to God; and as I never associated with the idle, but have always lived a domestic life, I have escaped some snares that might otherwise have fallen in my way. My faith in Christ, his own words and works, as delivered in the holy Gospels, has from my earliest years been so strong, that I never would enter into the reading of controversial books. I did not want to be converted to what I most firmly believe. All I pray for is, to be made more perfect in the true faith and knowledge of my Saviour, by whose merits alone I can hope for the pardon of my sins. It is a very easy matter to be a good Christian; as He says himself, and assigns the reason: for his yoke is easy, and his burden is light. I have in truth, my revered friend, a most lively faith, and so strong an assurance that it is my own fault if I am not eternally happy, that it is impossible for me to find words to express myself.

“I am one of few words. I never talk upon religion but in my own family; and here I can say with Joshua, that I and my house will serve the Lord. For one in the rank of life to which I am called by Providence, I have always been remarkably retired, as I always wished to be as much master of myself and my actions as possible: therefore I never was, or ever shall be, a good courtier.

“After saying so much about myself, it is time to come to that part of your letter where you mention your ideas as to my two young friends. I think you are perfectly right in changing your design of having them introduced to a certain musical gentleman, which I agree with you would not answer. Keep them up a little longer. Their merit will make its own way upon so much the surer footing, as it is independent. I hope you will live to see it; and though you have been called out of your retirement back into a world you wished to keep clear of, yet you have the satisfaction of finding that the world is obliged to come to you, and not you go to them. I hope I need not take any pains to assure you how much I am interested in their success in life, and how truly happy I shall be to render my young friends those services they so justly merit. I look upon myself, in the contracted state I am in here, as doing ■ kind of penance: but though it be very irksome at present, yet it comes to the reward of a consciousness that I am doing justice to my neighbour, and a firm persuasion that, with God’s assistance and blessing on my honest intentions, my latter days will be, like Job’s, better than my first. I pray God bless you, and send you all happiness here and hereafter.”

The Earl of Mornington died in less than three years after writing this letter. The phraseology is not in every instance such as persons of enlightened and established piety would use, but the spirit of it is admirable. The noble Earl enjoyed his property in consequence of Charles Wesley’s refusal to accept it; and there is reason to believe that the Methodist Clergyman, at this period of his life, was a means of conferring upon his Lordship a blessing of far richer value. A spirit so meek and teachable as the letter indicates, was prepared to receive those lessons of evangelical instruction which no man was better qualified to give than the Reverend friend to whom the letter was addressed.

Mr. John Wesley, who tenderly loved his brother’s children, did not entertain so favourable an opinion of their musical exhibitions as did their more partial father. Writing to John, after the first concert was finished, Charles says, “I am clear, without a doubt, that my sons’ concert is after the will and order of Providence. It has established them as musicians, and in a safe and honourable way. The Bishop

has since sent us word, that he has never heard any music he liked so well, and promises Charles five scholars next winter.

“Here is a musical child from Norwich, whom Sam cherishes and recommends. He has sent him many customers, so that his mother gets ten pounds a day by them. He has played before their Majesties. We neither envy his gains nor his honours. We do not repent that we did not make a show or advantage of our swans. They may still make their fortunes, if I would venture them into the world : but I never wish them rich. You also agree with me in this. Our good old father neglected every opportunity of selling our souls to the devil.”

Mr. John Wesley published this letter in the Arminian Magazine, but with a caveat against his brother's opinion, that the concerts were in the “order of Providence.” On that point Charles was “clear without doubt.” John declared himself to be “clear of another mind.” He probably thought that the professional advantages which his nephews might reap from this display of their talents, would be more than counterbalanced by their exposure to the temptations of the gay world, which they were not prepared, by deep personal piety, to meet and resist. Their temporal interest was perhaps advanced ; but their spiritual dangers were increased.

And yet it is a fact, that neither of the brothers, though their abilities were unquestionable, could ever obtain the patronage which their qualifications authorized them to expect. Dr. Shepherd introduced Charles to George III., with whom he became a great favourite. The King was passionately fond of Handel's music ; and as scarcely any man could play it on the organ as could this gifted performer, he received many marks of the royal approbation. George IV., also, whom Charles often declared to be an excellent judge of music, showed him more than common respect. While he was Prince of Wales, he made Charles his private organist ; and after his accession to the throne, he treated him with undiminished kindness and esteem. But in his attempts to obtain official and lucrative appointments Charles was singularly unsuccessful ; the name of Wesley, which he had the honour to bear, operating to his disadvantage. He offered himself for the situation of organist at St. James's chapel, at St. Paul's cathedral, at the Charter-house, at

Gresham College, at St. George's church, in Hanover-square, and at Westminster-abbey, when vacancies occurred, and was rejected in every instance. When he preferred his request at St. Paul's, he was rudely repelled by the Reverend gentlemen in whom the appointment was vested, with the abrupt and unseemly answer, "We want no Wesleys here!" being apprehensive, it would seem, that, under his "volant touch," the tones of the organ would imbue the worshippers with the spirit of Methodism. Be this as it may, these Ecclesiastics certainly needed some one to teach them Christian courtesy. The King heard of their incivility, and sent for the unfortunate organist to Windsor, where he expressed regret at what had occurred; and added, "Never mind. The name of Wesley is always welcome to me."

After the King had lost his sight, Mr. Charles Wesley was one day with His Majesty alone, when the venerable Monarch said, "Mr. Wesley, is there anybody in the room but you and me?" "No, your Majesty," was the reply. The King then said, "It is my judgment, Mr. Wesley, that your uncle, and your father, and George Whitefield, and Lady Huntingdon, have done more to promote true religion in the country than all the dignified Clergy put together, who are so apt to despise their labours."

In one of his visits to Carlton-house, during the residence of the Prince Regent there, one of the pages refused to admit him by the front entrance, and ordered him to go round, and seek admission by a less honourable way. He obeyed. The Prince saw him approach, and inquired why he came in that direction. Charles explained; and the Prince, sending for the page, gave him such a rebuke as he was not likely soon to forget; and commanded, that whenever Mr. Wesley came, he should be treated with all possible respect.

While Mr. Charles Wesley, jun., enjoyed the patronage of the father, he was not less esteemed by the daughter. He had the honour of teaching music to the Princess Charlotte, from whom he received a silver snuff-box, with a suitable inscription, upon which he set a high value.

He used to say, that when he was once dining with the late Bishop Burgess, who always manifested a strong regard for the Wesley family, a young Clergyman at the table, who seemed desirous of displaying an orthodox contempt for

- Methodism, addressing the learned Prelate, said, "My Lord, when I was passing through —, I saw a man preaching to a crowd of people in the open air. I suppose he was one of John Wesley's Itinerants." "Did you stop to hear him?" answered the Bishop. "O no, my Lord," said the Clergyman: "I did not suppose he could say anything that was worth hearing." The Bishop ended the conversation by significantly saying, "I should think you were very much mistaken. It is very probable, that man preached a better sermon than either you or I could have done. Do you know, Sir, that this gentleman," pointing to Charles, "is John Wesley's nephew?"

When Charles was rising into life he was an object of deep solicitude both with his father and his uncle, who were anxious that he should become a spiritual man. They saw and lamented the vanity of his mind, and urged him to a decided surrender of himself to his Saviour, that he might live for God and eternity. In one of his letters the affectionate father says, "Be content with your station, and seek not great things. Aspiring, living above themselves, in one word, ambition, is the ruin of the nation. It is natural to us, especially to youth; but what is religion for, if not to conquer our passions? If you, and your brother, and sister, would enter the kingdom of heaven, you must leave ambition, vanity, pride, behind you, and be of the few, not of the many."

His uncle also offered him the most valuable counsel in the following letters:—"August 4th, 1781. Dear Charles,—It has been much upon my mind to-day, that I am still indebted to you. There is a debt of love, which I should have paid before now. But I must not delay it any longer.

"I have long observed you with a curious eye; not as a musician, but as an immortal spirit, that is come forth from God, the Father of spirits, and is returning to Him in a few moments. But have you well considered this? Methinks if you had, it would be ever uppermost in your thoughts. For what trifles, in comparison of this, are all the shining baubles of the world!

' Wise is the man that labours to secure
The mighty, the important stake;
And by all methods strives to make
His passage safe, and his reception sure.'

“God has favoured you with many advantages. You have health and strength, and a thousand outward blessings. And why should not you have all the inward blessings which God has prepared for those that love Him? You are good-humoured, mild, and harmless. But *unless you are born again*, you cannot see the kingdom of God. But ask, and you shall receive; for it is nigh at hand! I am, dear Charles,
 “Your affectionate uncle.”

“Sept. 8th, 1781. Dear Charles,—Your letter gave me a good deal of satisfaction. You received my advice just as I hoped you would. You are now as it were in the crisis of your fate: just launching into life, and ready to fix your choice, whether you will have God or the world for your happiness. Scripture and reason tell you now, what experience will confirm, if it pleases God to prolong your life, that He ‘made your heart for himself; and it cannot rest till it rests in Him.’ You will be in danger of being diverted from this thought by the fashion of the world. The example of those that are round about us is apt to get within our guard. And indeed their spirit steals upon us in an unaccountable manner, and inclines us to think as they think. Yet you cannot avoid being very frequently among elegant men and women, that are without God in the world. And as your business, rather than your choice, calls you into the fire, I trust you will not be burned: seeing He whom you desire to serve is able to deliver you, even out of the burning, fiery furnace. I am, dear Charles,

“Your very affectionate uncle.”

When Charles was about twenty-five years of age he cherished an attachment to a young girl, of good repute, but without the distinctions of birth and fortune. His parents opposed the match, partly upon this ground: but his uncle John, who decidedly preferred good sense, piety, and virtue before money and an honourable ancestry, encouraged him in the courtship, and gave him fifty pounds as a wedding-present. The father, however, had other objections to the intended marriage, which he expressed in the following valuable letter to his son. It affords a striking illustration of the character of both.

“Bristol, August 30th, 1782. Dear Charles,—If any man would learn to pray, the proverb says, let him go to sea. I say, if any man would learn to pray, let him think of marry-

ing. For if he thinks aright, he will expect the blessing and success from God alone, and ask it in frequent and earnest prayer. Hitherto, my dear Charles, your thoughts of marriage have not made you more serious, but more light, more unadvisable, more distracted. This has slackened my desire to see you settled before I leave you. You do not yet take the way to be happy in a married state. You do not sufficiently take God into your council. No one step or action in life has so much influence upon eternity as marriage. It is a heaven or a hell, they say, in this world: much more so in the next. Hear the angel in Watts's ode:—

‘ Mark, said he, that happy pair,
Marriage helps religion there ;
Where kindred souls their God pursue,
They break with double vigour through
The dull, incumbent air.’

“ In order to your social happiness, make God your friend. Be in earnest to please Him. You began well by rising at six. Your plea of the necessity sometimes of sitting up late, will not serve you. Never sit up late, but when you cannot help it, and resolve to get a habit of rising. I must own I have no heart or hope till you recover your rising.

“ I called this morning on Wasborough. He has lost both his brothers. But the hand of the diligent maketh rich. Yesterday he taught twenty-nine scholars. He has fitted up a room for you, whenever you are disposed to come, and teach him harmony gratis. His son he promises you on your own terms. David Williams sends you his daughter only.

“ You have now had a taste of a Churchwarden's feast. What have you lost by not having been at a hundred such feasts ! The world live to eat. We eat to live. The more experience you gain, the more clearly you will be convinced that the way of the world, in most things, is just the reverse of what is right, and wise, and good. Give my respects to Dr. Shepherd. God have you in his keeping ! ”

By some means or other the courtship was broken off, and Charles does not appear to have ever again seriously entertained the thought of marriage. Nor indeed is it probable, considering the peculiar character of his mind, that this disappointment caused him any deep or lasting regret. His temper was gay and easy, and music was all the world to him.

It was more than his business and delight. It seemed to be the very end of his being. With his organ his heart was never sad. He could play well; and he knew it. Hence the frequency of his father's admonitions, calling him to humility and soberness of temper. "You are right," says he, "in keeping up your interest with Dr. W——. You are kind in excusing his and your other Doctor's vanity. It would be intolerable for you to cast the first stone at either. Modesty, you allow, becomes a mathematician, but not a musician. But you had better be a Newton in music, and leave others to commend you. You are too humble. Swift, you know, was too proud to be vain.

"Self-love is not in itself sinful. There is a right and just self-love, which sets a man upon securing his only true, that is, his eternal, happiness. This self-love, my dear Charles, is at present dormant in you: but I hope it will wake before your eyes are closed. Do not defer beginning, 'because you cannot be equal to me.' You may, if you please. You certainly may follow me to paradise."

If Mr. Charles Wesley was deeply concerned on account of the elder of his sons, because he was a stranger to the spirit of Christianity, though moral and harmless, he had reason to be much more anxious for Samuel, who was less tractable, and in whom the absence of true piety was more apparent. Mr. Madan, who was an adept in music, was Samuel's godfather; and when the boy displayed his early powers as a musician, this Clergyman carried him from place to place, among his friends, as a sort of prodigy. The child, though very young, was sensible and observant. He therefore felt that he was degraded, and conceived a prejudice against his father for suffering him to be thus exhibited as a boyish wonder. This to him was an essential injury, and the beginning of that downward course which he afterwards bitterly lamented. From this time he was indisposed to pay a just deference to his father's judgment; and he lost that tender filial affection which, had it been cherished in all its power, would have operated as a restraint upon his passions, and have kept him in the way of receiving spiritual good. The weakening of this principle in the child of a pious parent is an evil of the most serious magnitude.

When Samuel was about seven years of age he was thus

addressed by his pious and anxious father, who was then in London, and the son in Bristol :—

“ March 6th, 1773. Come now, my good friend Samuel, and let us reason together. God made you for himself; that is, to be for ever happy with Him. Ought you not, therefore, to serve and love Him? But you can do neither, unless He gives you the power. ‘Ask,’ He says himself, ‘and it shall be given you:’ that is, pray Him to make you love Him; and pray for it every morning and night, in your own words, as well as in those which have been taught you. You have been used to say your prayers in the sight of others. Henceforth go into a corner by yourself, where no eye but God’s may see you. There pray to your heavenly Father, who seeth in secret; and be sure He hears every word you speak, and sees everything you do, at all times, and in all places.

“ You should now begin to live by reason and religion. There should be sense, even in your play and diversions: therefore I have furnished you with maps and books and harpsichord. Every day get something by heart, whatever your mother recommends. Every day read one or more chapters in the Bible. I suppose your mother will take you now, in the place of your brother, to be her chaplain, to read the psalms and lessons when your sister does not. Mr. Fry must carry you on in your writing. I do not doubt your improvement both in that and music. God will raise you up friends when I am in my grave, where I shall be very soon: but your heavenly Father lives for ever, and you *may* live for ever with Him, and *will*, I hope, when you die.

“ Foolish people are too apt to praise you. If they see anything good in you, they should praise God, not you, for it. As for music, it is neither good nor bad in itself. You have a natural inclination to it: but God gave you that; therefore God only should be thanked and praised for it. Your brother has the same love of music, much more than you; yet he is not proud or vain of it. Neither, I trust, will you be. You will send me a long letter of an answer, and always look upon me both as

“ Your loving father and your friend.”

The kind instructions of this Christian parent were not received with due filial deference; and hence he had occasion to mourn over his son, who, as he advanced in life, departed

more and more from the good and the right way. Among the friends of the family was the well-known Mary Freeman Shepherd, a relation of Mr. Blackwell, the banker. She possessed a masculine intellect, and superior literary attainments; but was a Roman Catholic, and withal eccentric and revengeful. She gained considerable ascendancy over the mind of Samuel, and led him to an open avowal of his Popery; for, unknown to his father, he had joined the Church of Rome, and was not unfrequently seen figuring away in the idolatrous services of the mass. She was strongly suspected of being one principal cause of his apostasy; but this she absolutely denied, and declared that he was a disciple of the Pope before she had any acquaintance with him whatever; and that a young Frenchman, one of Samuel's companions, had induced him to renounce the Protestant faith. The fact is, he was not pious, but was led by a blind sentimentality; and the blandishments of Papal worship presented the finest scope for the exercise of his musical talents.

It was deemed requisite that his connexion with the Church of Rome should be disclosed to his unsuspecting father; and a consultation was held among his new friends as to the manner in which this should be done. It was suggested that Samuel himself was the most suitable person to inform his parent of the change which had taken place in his views. But he declined the task, and declared that he could not bear to witness the distress into which he knew the discovery would plunge his susceptible and aged father, whose tenderest affection he had shared from his infancy. It was then recommended that Father O'Leary, the Popish Priest, should be the bearer of the unwelcome intelligence. This was strenuously opposed by Mrs. Shepherd, who observed that Mr. Charles Wesley was a Clergyman, a scholar, and a gentleman; and was therefore entitled to superior respect. Whereas Father O'Leary had written against Mr. John Wesley in the spirit and manner of a buffoon; and to send such a man, with such a message, would be nothing less than an insult. A father's feelings were not to be wantonly trifled with.

At last it was agreed to request the Duchess of Norfolk, as the highest Roman Catholic Peeress in the realm, to wait upon Mr. Charles Wesley, at his house in Chesterfield-street,

and inform him that his son had renounced the Protestant faith, and become a member of the Church to which she herself belonged. There was a propriety in this arrangement, because her own son had subjected her to a similar trial, by renouncing the Church of Rome, and embracing the Protestant religion. She assented to this proposal, and communicated to the venerable man, trembling with age and infirmity, the intelligence which embittered the residue of his life. Being aware of her intended visit, he received her in his robes, as a Priest of the Church of England. She soon perceived the deep distress of mind into which he was thrown by the disclosures which she made to him respecting his unhappy son, and attempted to soothe him by suggesting that the young convert might be acting under the influence of divine grace, and be swayed by the love of God. The father, who too well knew the character of his son, and the nature of the errors which he had embraced, pacing his large drawing-room in great agitation, exclaimed, "Say, 'the loaves and fishes,' Madam! say, 'the loaves and fishes!'"

Mr. Charles Wesley passed through various sorrows in the course of his eventful life; but nothing grieved him so much as his Samuel's entrance into the idolatrous Church of Rome, against which he believed the severest threatenings of holy Scripture to be levelled. He regarded that community as thoroughly corrupt, and therefore a declared object of the divine vengeance. In his closet, when he thought of his son, his feelings rose to agony, as his private papers most affectingly declare. He wept and made supplication for his child, whom he now regarded as lost to him and the rest of the family. The very sight of one who was so dear to him, now a captive in mystic Babylon, caused his heart to bleed afresh. He did not think that his son would permanently remain a Romanist. The abominable superstitions, and still more abominable immoralities, of the corrupt community into which Samuel had entered, the father thought, would ere long appear in all their atrocity; and he was afraid lest the young man, having forsaken his former guides, would take refuge in infidelity, as ten thousand educated Romanists have done. As the unhappy wanderer refused any longer to listen to his father's instructions, that father could only commend him to God's mercy in incessant prayer.

The other children were the sorrowing witnesses of their grey-headed father's anguish: and hence the affecting entry of his daughter in one of his manuscript books, where she found a hymn of prayer for Samuel's recovery, when, some years before, he was afflicted with the small-pox: "Alas! this prayer was raised for his son Samuel! How little do parents know what evils are prevented by early death!"

The following stanzas, selected from many others of a similar kind, show the manner in which Mr. Charles Wesley felt and prayed in regard of his youngest-born, now doubly dead:—

Farewell, my all of earthly hope,
My nature's stay, my age's prop,
Irrevocably gone!
Submissive to the will divine,
I acquiesce, and make it mine;
I offer up my son!

But give I God a sacrifice
That costs me nought? my gushing eyes
The answer sad express,—
My gushing eyes, and troubled heart,
Which bleeds with its beloved to part,
Which breaks through fond excess!

Yet since he from my heart is torn,
Patient, resign'd, I calmly mourn
The darling snatch'd away:
Father, with thee thy own I leave;
Into thy mercy's arms receive,
And keep him to that day.

Keep (for I nothing else desire)
The bush unburnt amidst the fire,
And freely I resign
My child, for a few moments lent,
(*My child no longer!*) I consent
To see his face no more!

But hear my agonizing prayer,
And O preserve him, and prepare
To meet me in the skies,
When throned in bliss the Lamb appears,
Repairs my loss, and wipes the tears
For ever from my eyes!

Bereaved by his revoking word,
 I will not sin against the Lord,
 To pray I will not cease
 For the dear author of my woes,
 Till death these weary eyelids close,
 And I depart in peace.

But while an exile here I live,
 I live for a lost son to grieve,
 And in thy Spirit to groan,
 Thy blessings on his soul to claim,
 Through Jesu's all-prevailing name,
 Presented at thy throne.

Still let thine eye his steps pursue,
 And keep the fugitive in view,
 Where'er he rashly strays ;
 Control his violence of will,
 Withhold him, Lord, from pleasing ill,
 And the destroyer's ways.

That poison of the Romish sect,
 O let it not his soul infect,
 With close serpentine art,
 With bitter, persecuting zeal ;
 But from those mysteries of hell
 Preserve his simple heart.

Surround him with thy guardian power
 When ended the satanic hour,
 And darkness flees away,
 When infidels without disguise
 Tear open his unwilling eyes,
 And drag him into day.

See the true ancient church appears,
 Peter's unerring successors,
 Who Christ and God disown !
 Adulterers and murderers rise,
 And monsters of unnatural vice
 Adorn the Papal throne.

Shock'd at the hypocrites profane,
 My son, when undeceived, restrain
 From worse, if worse can be ;
 Nor let him all religion cast
 Behind, and shelter take at last
 In infidelity.

Father, for thy own mercy's sake,
Let all my mournful prayers come back
In that tremendous day,
While ready and resolved he is
To plunge into the dark abyss,
And cast his soul away!

Then in his soul the secret tell,
And answering for thyself, reveal
The Truth so long unknown,
The Way, which thou in Jesus art,
And Life, eternal life, impart
By giving him thy Son.

The blessed day of my release
(Should sorrow's pangs no sooner cease)
Will swallow up my woe,
Make darkness light, and crooked straight,
Unwind the labyrinths of fate,
And all the secret show.

But while thy way is in the deep,
Thou dost not chide, if still I weep,
If still mine eyes run o'er :
The bitterness of death is past ;
The bitterness of life may last
A few sad moments more.

Patient till death I feel my pain,
But neither murmur nor complain,
While humbled in the dust ;
My sins the cause of my distress
I feel, and mournfully confess
The punishment is just.

Wherefore with soft and silent pace
I measure out my suffering days
In view of joys to come,
In hope His plan to comprehend,
When Jesus shall with clouds descend,
And call me from the tomb.

My God alone I fain would love,
And patient thy return attend,
These clouds and mountains to remove,
And give me an expected end,
Explain my life of misery,
With all thy love's designs on me.

A child of sorrow from the womb,
 By sad variety of pain
 Weigh'd down, I sink into the tomb,
 Yet only of myself complain ;
 My sins the root of bitterness
 I must in life and death confess.

But trouble shall not always last :
 Affliction's child shall weep no more,
 When thankful for my sufferings *past*,
 Exulting on the heavenly shore,
 I tell the' acclaiming hosts above,
 That all thy paths were truth and love.

Come, Finisher of sin and woe,
 And let me die my God to see ;
 My God, as I am known, to know,
 Fathom the depths of Deity,
 And spend, contemplating thy face,
 A bless'd eternity in praise.

Against the instrument of ill,
 O may I no resentment find,
 No wrong, vindictive temper feel,
 Unfriendly wish, or thought unkind,
 But put the yearning bowels on,
 The tender mercies of thy Son.

Still would I keep the Lamb in view,
 Harmless in thought, and word, and deed,
 That Lover of his foes pursue,
 Who suffer'd in his murderers' stead,
 Expired Himself, that they might live,
 And meekly gasp'd in death, "FORGIVE!"

His Spirit into my soul inspire,
 That, in true holiness renew'd,
 With pure, benevolent desire,
 For evil I may render good,
 Kind to my adversary prove,
 And cruel hate requite with love.

If thou remit my debt immense,
 I may forgive a trivial debt,
 A fellow-servant's hundred pence,
 Against ten thousand talents set :
 I *do* forgive, myself forgiven,
 And haste to meet my foe in heaven.

While Mr. Charles Wesley wept and prayed over his lost son, and in the bitterness of his grief sighed for his own dismissal from the body, Mr. John Wesley attempted to reclaim the wanderer, by showing him his real character as a fallen and unholy man. He would not gratify the perverted youth by arguing with him the long-agitated questions of transubstantiation, infallibility, confession, purgatory, and the number of the sacraments; but tried to convince him that he was a sinner; so that even admitting all his new opinions to be true, and important as he assumed them to be, he must perish everlastingly unless he were born again to a life of holiness. The following letter, which he addressed with yearning pity to his erring nephew, is highly characteristic of his enlightened piety and faithfulness :—

“ August 19th, 1784. Dear Sammy,—As I have had a regard for you ever since you was a little one, I have often thought of writing to you freely. And I am persuaded, what is spoken in love will be taken in love: and if so, if it does you no good, it will do you no harm.

“ Many years ago I observed, that as it had pleased God to give you a remarkable talent for music, so He had given you a quick apprehension of other things, a capacity for making some progress in learning, and, what is of far greater value, a desire to be a Christian. But, meantime, I have often been pained for you, fearing you did not set out the right way. I do not mean with regard to this or that set of opinions, Protestant or Romish. All these I trample under foot. But with regard to those weightier matters, wherein if they go wrong, either Protestants or Papists will perish everlastingly. I feared you was not *born again*: and ‘except a man be born again,’ if we may credit the Son of God, ‘he cannot see the kingdom of heaven:’ except he experience that inward change of the earthly, sensual mind, for the mind which was in Christ Jesus. You might have thoroughly understood the scriptural doctrine of the new birth, yea, and experienced it long before now, had you used the many opportunities of improvement which God put into your hands, while you believed both your father and me to be teachers sent from God. But, alas! what are you now? Whether of this Church or that, I care not. You may be saved in either, or damned in either. But I fear, you are

not born again : and except you are born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. You believe the Church of Rome is right. What then ? If you are not born of God, *you* are of *no church*. Whether Bellarmine or Luther be right, you are certainly wrong, if you are not ‘born of the Spirit ;’ if you are not renewed in the spirit of your mind in the likeness of Him that created you. I doubt you was never convinced of the necessity of this great change. And there is now greater danger than ever, that you never will ; that you will be diverted from the thought of it, by a train of new notions, new practices, new modes of worship ; all which put together, (not to consider whether they are unscriptural, superstitious, and idolatrous, or no,—I would as soon pick straws as dispute of this with *you*, in your present state of mind,)—all, I say, put together, do not amount to one grain of true, vital, spiritual religion.

“O Sammy, you are out of your way ! You are out of God’s way ! You have not given Him your heart. You have not found, nay, it is well if you have so much as sought, happiness in God ! and poor zealots, while you are in this state of mind, would puzzle you about this or the other Church ! O fools and blind ! Such guides as these lead men by shoals to the bottomless pit.

“My dear Sammy, your first point is, to repent, and believe the Gospel. Know yourself, a poor, guilty, helpless sinner ! Then know Jesus Christ, and Him crucified. Let the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit, that you are a child of God : and let the love of God be shed abroad in your heart, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto you : and then, if you have no better work, I will talk with you of transubstantiation or purgatory. Meantime, I commend you to Him who is able to guide you into all truth ; and am, dear Sammy,

“Your affectionate uncle.”

Mr. Charles Wesley’s daughter, and his other son, though they were at this time strangers to religion in its life and power, deeply regretted the step which their wayward brother had taken, in renouncing the Protestant faith, and assuming the Romish profession. Charles expressed this feeling in a letter to his uncle, which called forth the following answer. The venerable man, it will be observed, endeavours

to turn to a good account the sad occurrence which they all lamented, by teaching truths of the utmost importance.

“May 2d, 1786. I doubt not both Sarah and you are in trouble, because Samuel has ‘changed his religion.’ Nay, he has changed his opinion and mode of worship: but that is not religion; it is quite another thing. ‘Has he then,’ you may ask, ‘sustained no loss by the change?’ Yes, unspeakable loss; because his new opinion, and mode of worship, are so unfavourable to religion, that they make it, if not impossible to one who once knew better, yet extremely difficult.

“What then is religion? It is happiness in God, or in the knowledge and love of God. It is faith working by love; producing ‘righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’ In other words, it is a heart and life devoted to God; or communion with God the Father, and the Son; or, the mind which was in Christ Jesus, enabling us to walk as He walked. Now, either he has this religion, or he has not: if he has, he will not finally perish, notwithstanding the absurd, unscriptural opinions he has embraced, and the superstitious and idolatrous modes of worship. But these are so many shackles, which will greatly retard him in running the race that is set before him. If he has not this religion, if he has not given God his heart, the case is unspeakably worse: I doubt if he ever will; for his new friends will continually endeavour to hinder him, by putting something else in its place, by encouraging him to rest in the form, notions, or externals, without being born again, without having Christ in him, the hope of glory, without being renewed in the image of Him that created him. This is the deadly evil. I have often lamented that he had not this holiness, without which no man can see the Lord. But though he had it not, yet, in his hours of cool reflection, he did not hope to go to heaven without it: but now he is or will be taught, that, let him only have a right faith, (that is, such and such notions,) and add thereunto such and such externals, and he is quite safe. He may indeed roll a few years in purging fire; but he will surely go to heaven at last!

“Therefore you and my dear Sarah have great need to weep over him: but have you not also need to weep for yourselves? For, have you given God your hearts? Are you holy in heart? Have you the kingdom of God within you?

righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost? the only true religion under heaven. O cry unto Him that is mighty to save, for this one thing needful! Earnestly and diligently use all the means which God hath put plentifully into your hands! Otherwise I should not at all wonder if God permit you also to be given up to a strong delusion. But whether you were or were not, whether you are Protestants or Papists, neither you nor he can ever enter into glory, unless you are now cleansed from all pollution of flesh and spirit, and perfect holiness in the fear of God."

In the history of the unfortunate Samuel Wesley we have a striking illustration of the spirit of Popery. He was not pious when he was persuaded to enter into the Romish community; and during his stay there he was not at all improved either in his temper or morals. Yet the friends of the Papacy gloried in their convert; and he himself was wishful to do something that should distinguish him among his new connexions. He therefore composed a high mass for the use of the chapel of Pope Pius the Sixth, who then wore the triple crown; and for this service he received the thanks of the Pontiff, transmitted through the Vicar Apostolic. Popery, however, had never taken any deep hold upon his understanding and conscience. It was with him a matter of taste, opinion, and sentiment. For a few years he attended its fascinating ceremonial, without any solid benefit, either intellectual, spiritual, or moral, and then withdrew from the Papal Church, saying that he did not "care a straw for any excommunication that her priesthood could utter." To make proselytes, and thus extend her own secular dominion, is the leading design of the Church of Rome. The sanctification of her children is a very subordinate object, if any object at all. The devoted father and uncle of Samuel Wesley laboured for the one purpose of turning men from sin to holiness, that, like the Apostles of their Lord, they might "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;" and they felt that their ministrations were comparatively useless, if bad men were not converted into saints. In this respect Popery and Methodism are essentially different from each other; and it was a fatal mistake in Samuel Wesley when he turned his back upon the holy and happy

religion of his parents for the worldly blandishments of "the mother of harlots."

When this young man had ceased to "hear the instructions of his father," and "forsaken the law of his mother," he was exposed to other evil influences besides that of Popery. He received quite as much injury from his godfather and patron, the Rev. Martin Madan, as from the agents of "the man of sin." This Clergyman, who for many years was a popular Preacher in London, was the Chaplain of the Lock Hospital, founded for the benefit of penitent females, who had wandered from the paths of virtue. Commiserating their case, he endeavoured to lower the standard of Christian morality, so as to extenuate their sin, if not justify several of them in the profligate course which they had pursued. For this purpose he published a large and elaborate work, in which he attempted to prove that Christianity, as well as Judaism, tolerates polygamy. The unhallowed reasonings of this erring guide, conducted in the spirit and manner of a special pleader, and intended to adapt the standard of Christian morals to the taste of the sensual, there is reason to fear, inflicted a permanent injury upon many a youthful mind, not thoroughly disciplined in divine truth, and imbued with a love of holiness. The son of Mr. Charles Wesley unhappily did not escape uninjured by the speculative poison of this eloquent and plausible man, whose character and influence (happily for the world!) gradually declined from the time at which he proposed his unhallowed theory.

Miss Sarah Wesley was younger than her brother Charles, and a few years older than Samuel. She was born in Bristol, as were all the other children. For some time she attended the school of Miss Temple, in that city, but was taught Latin by her father, as was her brother Samuel also. Like both her parents, and her brothers, she was little of stature. She bore a striking resemblance to her father in her features, and especially in her profile. In mature life she was remarkable for the acuteness and elegance of her mind, as well as for the accuracy and extent of her information: so that she was qualified to move with advantage in the highest literary circles. Mrs. Hannah More, Miss Benger, Miss Hamilton, Miss Porter, Miss Aikin, Mrs. Barbauld, Dr. Gregory, and many other persons of distinction, were her

personal friends, and none of them had any reason to be ashamed of her companionship. Her love and esteem for her father were very strong, and his regard for her was tender and enduring. He took great pains in the cultivation of her intellect; and his numerous private letters to her, written when he was separated from his family, show the affectionate interest which he took in her spiritual improvement. It was the intense desire of his heart that she should be a Christian indeed. One day, during her childhood, when she was repeating her Latin lesson to him, before she had sufficiently mastered it, he said, somewhat impatiently, "Sarah, you are as stupid as an ass." She said nothing, but lifted up her eyes with meekness, surprise, and imploring affection. On catching her look, he instantly burst into tears, and finished the sentence by adding, "And as patient!"

Miss Wesley, possessing the true philosophic spirit, had considerable power over the mind of her faithful brother Charles. Once, when he was somewhat dejected, feeling that his talents had not been adequately rewarded, he came to her, bringing some of his beautiful compositions, and requesting that she would tie them up for him. "All my works," said he, "are neglected. They were performed at Dr. Shepherd's, in Windsor, but no one minds them now!" She answered, in a sprightly tone, "What a fool you would be to regret such worldly disappointments! You may secure a heavenly crown, and immortal honour, and have a thousand blessings which were denied to poor Otway, Butler, and other bright geniuses. Johnson toiled for daily bread till past fifty. Pray think of your happier fate." "True," said he, meekly, and took away his productions with sweet humility. Having recorded this anecdote, she adds, "Lord, sanctify all these mundane mortifications to him and me. The view of another state will prevent all regrets."

During Mr. Charles Wesley's residence in London, he lived in habits of intimacy with several persons of distinction, who honoured him with their friendship, notwithstanding his Methodism. He had free intercourse with Lord Mansfield, whom he had befriended in his boyhood, at Westminster School. He sometimes consulted his Lordship on questions affecting the Methodists in their relation to the established Church; and that eminent Lawyer declared his readiness to

render any service in his power both to him and his brother. Dr. Boyce (one of the fathers of modern church music) and Mr. Kelway (the musical tutor of Queen Charlotte) were frequent visitors of the family in Chesterfield-street. Lord Dartmouth cultivated the friendship of Mr. Charles Wesley on a religious account; and Dr. Johnson mentions him as a person with whose views and habits he was familiar. Speaking of the case of Elizabeth Hobson, of Sunderland, he remarked, in reference to the brothers, "Charles Wesley, who is a more stationary man, does not believe the story."* Among Charles's papers are two notes in the handwriting of the Doctor, one addressed to the father, and the other to the daughter, inviting them to dine with him. The first of these is as follows:—"Sir,—I beg that you, and Mrs. and Miss Wesley, will dine with your brother and Mrs. Hall, at my house in Bolt-court, Fleet-street, to-morrow. That I have not sent sooner, if you knew the disordered state of my health, you would easily forgive me. I am, Sir,

"Your most humble servant,

"Wednesday."

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Writing to Miss Wesley, the Doctor says, "Madam,—I will have the first day that you mention, my dear, on Saturday next; and, if you can, bring your aunt with you, to

"Your most humble servant,

"Oct. 28th, 1783."

"SAM. JOHNSON."

Among Mr. Charles Wesley's friends may also be ranked the late Mr. Wilberforce, then a young statesman, just rising into life. Their first interview took place at the house of Mrs. Hannah More; and is thus described by that pious and philanthropic man:—"I went, I think in 1786, to see her, and when I came into the room Charles Wesley rose from the table, around which a numerous party sat at tea, and coming forwards to me, gave me solemnly his blessing. I was scarcely ever more affected. Such was the effect of his manner and appearance, that it altogether overset me, and I burst into tears, unable to restrain myself."†

Justly as Mr. Charles Wesley was esteemed on account of his piety and abilities, there are persons who indulge suspicions injurious to his religious character. They have supposed

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, vol. vii., p. 141. Edit. 1835.

† Life of Wilberforce, vol. i., p. 248.

him to be the Sabbath-breaking Clergyman whom Cowper has strongly censured in his "Progress of Error," under the fictitious name of Occiduus: and certainly if the poet's description were applicable to him, he would ill-deserve the admiration in which he has been held as a man of God. But there is, in fact, no just ground to believe that he was the person intended. If he was, the poet was grossly deceived, and wrote not satire, but direct slander. The passage is as follows:—

"Occiduus is a Pastor of renown;
 When he has pray'd and preach'd the Sabbath down,
 With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
 Quavering and semiquavering care away.
 The full concerto swells upon your ear;
 All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear
 The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
 Had summon'd them to serve his golden god;
 So well that thought the' employment seems to suit,
 Psaltery and sackbut, dulcimer and flute.
 'O fie! 'tis evangelical and pure:
 Observe each face, how sober and demure!
 Ecstasy sets her stamp on every mien;
 Chins fallen, and not an eyeball to be seen.'
 Still I insist, though music heretofore
 Has charm'd me much, (not e'en Occiduus more,)
 Love, joy, and peace make harmony more meet
 For Sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.
 "Will not the sickliest sheep of every flock
 Resort to this example as a rock;
 There stand, and justify the foul abuse
 Of Sabbath hours with plausible excuse:—
 'If apostolic gravity be free
 To play the fool on Sundays, why not we?
 If he the tinkling harpsichord regards
 As inoffensive, what offence in cards?
 Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay!
 Laymen have leave to dance, if Parsons play.'"

This passage must be taken in connexion with one of Cowper's letters, in which he speaks on the same subject; and both together contain direct proof that Occiduus and Charles Wesley were two very different persons. Writing to his friend Mr. Newton, under the date of Sept. 9th, 1781, the poet says, "I am sorry to find that the censure I have passed upon Occiduus is even better founded than I supposed. Lady Austen has been at his sabbatical concerts, which, it

seems, are composed of song-tunes and psalm-tunes indiscriminately; music without words; and I suppose one may say consequently without devotion. On a certain occasion, when her niece was sitting at her side, she asked his opinion concerning the lawfulness of such amusements as are to be found at Vauxhall and Ranelagh; meaning only to draw from him a sentence of disapprobation, that Miss Green might be the better reconciled to the restraint under which she was held, when she found it warranted by the judgment of so famous a Divine. But she was disappointed. He accounted them innocent, and recommended them as useful. Curiosity, he said, was natural to young persons; and it was wrong to deny them a gratification which they might be indulged in with the greatest safety; because the denial being unreasonable, the desire of it would still subsist. It was but a walk, and a walk was as harmless in one place as another; with other arguments of a similar import, which might have proceeded with more grace, at least with less offence, from the lips of a sensual layman. He seems, together with others of our acquaintance, to have suffered considerably in his spiritual character by his attachment to music.” *

That Mr. Charles Wesley could not be the person here intended is undeniable, unless Cowper was criminally inattentive to facts, and guilty of the foulest calumny, which is disproved by the goodness of his heart. No proof whatever exists that Mr. Charles Wesley suffered any spiritual declension through “attachment to music.” He loved to hear it indeed; (for who does not?) but he had only a superficial acquaintance with it as a science. In early life he occasionally played on the flute; but he had discontinued that practice long before Cowper became an author. He confesses that he could not judge of the performances of his sons, but was guided by the opinions of others. When the sons had chosen music as a profession, they were bound to excel in it to the utmost limit of their ability; and it could be no fault in the father to encourage them in that which was matter of duty.

But “sabbatical concerts,” partly religious and partly

* Grimshawe's Cowper, vol. i., p. 292.

secular, he had none. On this subject we have the express and solemn testimony of his younger son, who was living when Cowper's letter was published, and to whom the question of its reference to his father was proposed by the writer of this narrative. He promptly returned a written declaration on the subject, in which he says, "The occasional performances by my brother of some portions of sacred music on Sunday, were never desecrated by the admixture of 'song-tunes,' or any other airs but those dedicated exclusively to sacred subjects." Samuel Wesley was resident in the house of his father at the time here referred to, and is therefore a competent witness in the case. The playing of song-tunes on the Sabbath can never be reconciled with Christian morality. But if holy music is a part of the employment and happiness of heaven, as the Scriptures declare it is, it cannot be inappropriate to the evening of the Lord's day, when used devotionally: and no evidence exists that Mr. Charles Wesley ever countenanced it in any other form. According to Samuel Wesley's account, his brother occasionally played upon the harpsichord or the organ, in their father's house, on the Sabbath-day; and no one else. He had no fellow-performers. Whereas Occiduus had a whole band of musicians. "The full concerto swelled upon the ear" of the passer-by; and those who witnessed the scene were ready to imagine that Nebuchadnezzar had summoned his whole band, to play upon "the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, and dulcimer," in honour of the golden image which he had set up in the plain of Dura. "All elbows shook" in the orchestra, and the listening crowd below were thrown into ecstasies. Can it be needful to adduce any other proof, that Charles Wesley's house was not the scene of these profane exhibitions? and that he had no concern in them whatever?

To theatrical amusements, as pregnant with the most frightful evils, he was religiously opposed, and therefore could not be the man who "accounted them as innocent, and recommended them as useful." When Cowper wrote his poem and his letter, in which he censures Occiduus, Mr. Charles Wesley's hymns for watch-night services had been in public circulation nearly forty years; and in one of them he had by name, and in terms the most unqualified, con-

demned the amusements of the theatre, and of similar places of resort :—

The civiler crowd
In theatres proud
Acknowledge His power,
And Satan in nightly assemblies adore :
To the masque and the ball
They fly at his call,
Or in pleasures excel,
And chant in a grove to the harpers of hell.

In a marginal note, designed to explain the last of these terribly-expressive lines, it is said that Vauxhall and Ranelagh gardens are here especially meant. One direct effect of Mr. Charles Wesley's ministry was to detach play-goers from their diversions, as both vain and sinful. When Mrs. Rich, of the Covent-garden theatre, received his doctrine, and acknowledged him as her spiritual adviser, as has been already stated, she abandoned the stage for ever, to the grief and mortification of her husband, who had derived considerable gains from her powers as an actress. It is also remarkable, that at the very time when Cowper was writing, Samuel Wesley desired to attend the theatres, and his father would not suffer him. The son was greatly offended with the restraint which was imposed upon him; but he lived long enough to see that it was salutary, and kindly intended. That Mr. Charles Wesley ever encouraged any one to attend such places, Samuel, who had felt the weight of his father's authority on this subject, declared to be "flagrantly untrue," and opposed to his "consistent and unflinching enmity to vicious temptation." It is, in fact, doubtful whether any man of his age was a more strenuous and successful opponent of all such dissipating and unhallowed amusements. The conclusion, therefore, that Occiduus was some other person, and not the poet of Methodism, is inevitable. If the description of Occiduus be applied to him, it is notoriously untrue.

Who then, it may be inquired, was the mysterious personage, who thus offended against the sanctity of the Sabbath, and advised young people to attend the theatre, and other places of mere amusement? He was "a Pastor of renown," and deemed "evangelical." These characteristics apply directly to Mr. Madan, who was a popular Clergyman, of

Calvinian tenets ; * well known to be musical in his taste and habits ; and as an avowed advocate of polygamy, he could not be very nice in his views of Christian morality. Cowper also states, in one of his letters, that in writing “The Progress of Error,” where the character of Occiduus is drawn, he had Madan in his eye.† Madan was Cowper’s cousin, with whose habits and views he was well acquainted ; and many of Cowper’s letters show how deeply he was offended with the unhallowed levity of his kinsman’s speculations.

Should it be inquired on what ground the name of Occiduus could be given to Madan, the answer is, that the word properly signifies “western,” and may refer to the situation of the Lock Hospital, where Mr. Madan preached, and was attended by listening multitudes. It was at the “west-end” of London, “near Hyde-park-corner,” as is stated on the title-page of a volume of hymns which Madan published for the use of his congregation.

Taking all these considerations into the account, it is far more probable that Cowper intended, under the name of Occiduus, to censure the popular and speculative Madan, than Mr. Charles Wesley, who then occupied only a very subordinate place among public men, being aged, sickly, and infirm. For twenty years he had exercised his ministry in two or three Methodist chapels, into which few wealthy and fashionable religionists ever entered. To “renown,” in the popular sense of that term, he had then little claim ; and it is doubtful whether, as an anti-Calvinist, Cowper would have acknowledged him to be “evangelical.” In one of his letters, written about the time that he was censuring Occiduus, Cowper mentions Mr. Fletcher, of Madeley, and expresses a doubt whether that holy man was indeed a Christian ; so prejudiced was he against what he understood to be Mr. Fletcher’s anti-Calvinistical doctrine, which was substantially that of Mr. Charles Wesley.

* “The Lock chapel was the favourite resort of religious characters in the time of the Rev. Martin Madan, not only from the high popularity of his talents as a Preacher, but from the fidelity and impressive energy with which he proclaimed the fundamental doctrines of the Scripture.”—Grimshawe’s Cowper, vol. iii., p. 320.

† Southey’s Cowper, vol. iv., pp. 79, 80.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE means which Mr. John and Charles Wesley felt it their duty to adopt, for the revival of true religion in the three kingdoms, after they had themselves obtained the vital Christian faith, placed them in great difficulties with regard to the established Church; and those difficulties pressed upon them with increasing weight as they advanced in life. When the societies were few in number, they were easily persuaded to attend the services of the Church, especially the Lord's supper; but in process of time many joined them who had been educated in the principles of Dissent; and several of these would on no account unite in the worship of the Establishment. Others were unwilling to attend, because they could not receive the doctrine of their respective Clergymen, or because their Clergymen were not even moral in their lives. How to meet the views of these people, without opening the Methodist chapels during the time of divine service in the churches, and without allowing the Preachers to administer the sacraments, it was not easy to determine. The very agitation of these questions Mr. Charles Wesley could not endure. All unwillingness to attend the services of the Church he regarded as little less than stubbornness and rebellion. No man ever censured ungodly Ministers with greater severity than he, especially those of the established Church; but he would concede nothing in favour of those who had any scruples concerning the ministrations of these men. Whatever might be the personal character of the Clergy, or the doctrines they taught, he contended that the Methodists were to be preserved in strict connexion with the Church of England; even where the Clergy refused to administer to them the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

Mr. John Wesley was a more practical man. The Church was dear to him; and, next to the salvation of souls, the object dearest to his heart was the attendance of his spiritual children upon her ordinances. But among these children he found several who never did belong to her communion, and whom he could not induce to tread her courts; and not a few

of these were devout and peaceable. They were free from a factious spirit, and gave satisfactory proof that they were actuated by conscientious motives. Such men he could neither coerce nor despise ; but how to meet their case, without departing farther from the order of the Church than he had yet done, or ever intended to do, cost him years of anxious thought.

Another subject of deep interest to Mr. Wesley, and to his Preachers and people generally, was the continuance of the itinerant ministry, and of the discipline which he had established in the societies, when he should be no more. While he lived he was a centre of union to them all. Every one was ready to defer to his judgment, and his power to appoint the Preachers was unquestioned. He determined that, after his decease, the power which he possessed should devolve upon the Conference : but there arose a question as to the manner in which that body should be constituted. Hitherto the Conference consisted of Preachers whom Mr. Wesley invited to meet him once a year for the purpose of united counsel. Unless something, therefore, were done, to give the Conference a legal existence, independently of Mr. Wesley's presence and will, it could not survive him. The chapels would remain ; but there would be no power to station the Preachers, and to superintend the societies.

This subject appeared in all its importance at the Bristol Conference of 1783, during which Mr. Wesley had a dangerous illness, so that for some days his recovery was very doubtful. Early in the morning he was seized with an impetuous flux, which was followed by a violent cramp, first in his feet, legs, and thighs, then in his side and throat. The medicine which was administered removed the cramp, but took away his speech, hearing, and power of motion ; so that for several days he lay as a mere log, and was in continual fever. Had he died at that time, according to all human probability, the itinerant ministry which he had organized must have ceased, and the societies have been dissolved. The Preachers felt the critical situation in which they were placed, and united to request their venerable father, on his recovery, to provide against a casualty which might be ruinous to the work in which they were engaged. He acceded to their wishes, took the best legal advice that was accessible,

and in the month of February following executed the “DEED OF DECLARATION,” which he caused to be enrolled in His Majesty’s High Court of Chancery, appointing by name one hundred Travelling Preachers “the Conference of the people called Methodists,” defining their powers, and providing for the filling up of vacancies from time to time. He reserved to himself and his brother, however, during their life-time, the right of appointing the Preachers to the different chapels. “Without some authentic deed,” says he, “fixing the meaning of the term, the moment I died the Conference had been nothing. Therefore any of the proprietors of the land on which our preaching-houses were built might have seized them for their own use ; and there would have been none to hinder them ; for the Conference would have been nobody, a mere empty name. In all the pains I have taken about this absolutely necessary deed, I have been labouring not for myself, (I have no interest therein,) but for the whole body of Methodists ; in order to fix them upon such a foundation as is likely to stand as long as the sun and moon endure. That is, if they continue to walk by faith, and to show forth their faith by their works ; otherwise, I pray God to root out the memorial of them from the earth.” *

This deed, as might be expected, gave great offence to some of the Preachers whose names were not in it ; so that at the ensuing Conference considerable excitement prevailed. Mr. Fletcher was present, and interceded with Mr. Wesley in behalf of these refractory sons in the Gospel, and the parties appeared to be reconciled ; but three of them afterwards withdrew from their work : Mr. Joseph Pilmoor, and John Hampson, father and son. Mr. Pilmoor went to America, where he was ordained, at Mr. Charles Wesley’s recommendation, by one of the American Bishops. The elder Mr. Hampson became the Minister of a small Dissenting congregation ; the Conference allowing him a small annuity to the end of his life, as a mark of their respect, and an acknowledgment of his former services. The younger Mr. Hampson obtained episcopal ordination, and the living of Sunderland. He wrote a Life of Mr. Wesley, which he put to press with indecent haste, while the remains of that venerable man were

* Wesley’s Works, vol. xiii., p. 217.

scarcely cold in his grave; and spoke of the deceased, to whom he was indebted for his education, and therefore for his preferment, in a manner that reflected little credit upon his heart. His book is a sort of quiver, from which the detractors of Mr. Wesley generally select their arrows.

At this Conference the ministrations of Mr. Fletcher were attended by a power and effect which those who witnessed them could never forget. He preached on the case of the Prophet who was sent from Judah to Bethel, to testify against the idolatry which was practised there; who, after the delivery of his message, "was disobedient to the word of the Lord," and was therefore slain by a lion. Mr. Fletcher described him as "an Antinomian," whose fate was a solemn warning to all religious teachers. He encouraged the Methodist Preachers in their work, by assuring them that, while they lived in the spirit of their holy vocation, and delivered the truth of God with evangelical faithfulness, every arm that was stretched out to arrest them would be dried up, as in the case of Jeroboam. His attitude and whole manner in prayer were those of a man who felt that he had the fullest access to God, and who with adoring confidence conversed with Him face to face. His hands were stretched towards heaven, his countenance lighted up with reverent joy, and every one was ready, because of the solemn awe which the manifested presence of God inspired, to "wrap his face in his mantle," and sink into the dust of humiliation.

At the time of this Conference Mr. Wesley had in contemplation one of the most important measures that he ever adopted for the advancement of the work of God: the elevation of his societies in America into a regular church, by providing for the administration of the sacraments by their own Preachers. In reference to this object, he consulted his faithful friend the Vicar of Madeley, and a few weeks after the Conference prosecuted his pious design.

The war of American independence was now ended, and the people of the United States were acknowledged to be no longer under the British crown. Many of the Protestant Clergy, from whom the Methodists had hitherto received the sacraments, had left the country, or ceased to officiate; and the societies generally on that vast continent, amounting to upwards of eighteen thousand members, had none to baptize

their children, or administer to them the memorials of their Saviour's passion. The character of the episcopal Clergy in America was at that time extremely low. Several of them during the war had acted as soldiers, and others by their negligence and sin were a scandal to the sacred office. This is acknowledged by writers belonging to their own Church. Dr. Seabury, an American Clergyman, came to England, for the purpose of obtaining consecration to the episcopal office from the English Prelates. After waiting for two years, his request was denied. He then applied to the Scottish Bishops, who had derived their orders from the Nonjurors of the reign of William and Mary; and from them he at length received the desired honour. In the mean while the American Methodists, who had no sympathy either with Dr. Seabury, or the Bishops by whom he was consecrated, looked to Mr. Wesley as their spiritual father, and implored his advice and aid. Having considered the subject in all its bearings, he resolved to appoint Dr. Coke and Mr. Asbury joint Superintendents over the American Preachers and societies, with power to ordain others for the full duties of the ministry.

Mr. Asbury had long been a faithful labourer in America, where he had commanded great respect by his piety, wisdom, and usefulness. Dr. Coke had now been in connexion with Mr. Wesley about eight years, and had approved himself by his fidelity and zeal. He was born at Brecon, in South Wales, and educated at the University of Oxford, where he became a Deist under the influence of his fellow-collegians. Having recovered his faith in divine revelation, by a careful study of its evidences, he was ordained as a Clergyman of the Church of England, and obtained the curacy of South-Petherton, in Somersetshire, where he was shamefully persecuted, and at length dismissed, on account of his faithfulness in attempting to turn the people from sin to holiness. He then connected himself with Mr. Wesley, who often observed that Dr. Coke was to him a second Thomas Walsh. An expression of higher respect he could scarcely have uttered. The Doctor, who, like the two Wesleys, was little in stature, was eminently active, lively, and disinterested. Of ordinary difficulties he made no account; for his heart was all on fire to extend the blessings of salvation to the ends of the earth. In promoting the settlement of Methodist chapels in Eng-

land, so that they should not be alienated from the Connexion, and in preparing the "DEED OF DECLARATION," he had rendered services of the most substantial value to Mr. Wesley and his people.

On the morning of September 1st, 1784, Mr. Wesley, by the imposition of hands, solemnly appointed the Doctor to the work which he had assigned him, being assisted by the Rev. James Creighton, a very pious and intelligent episcopal Clergyman, who then officiated in the Methodist chapels in London. Immediately after, with the assistance of Dr. Coke and Mr. Creighton, Mr. Wesley ordained Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey, to act as Elders in America, by baptizing and administering the Lord's supper. He also published, for the use of his people both in England and America, a Liturgy, differing little from that of the established Church, but shortened in most of its services.

For several years Mr. Wesley's Preachers had been stationed in some of the principal towns in Scotland, and societies were formed under their care; but the members, in many instances, were in circumstances scarcely better than those of their brethren in America immediately after the war. There were indeed Clergymen in Scotland; but several of them absolutely refused to admit the Methodists to the Lord's table, except on the condition that they would renounce all future connexion with the Methodist ministry and discipline. During the Conference of the following year, therefore, which was held in London, Mr. Wesley ordained three of his Preachers to administer the sacraments in North Britain. "Having," says he in his Journal, "with a few select friends, weighed the matter thoroughly, I yielded to their judgment, and set apart three of our well-tried Preachers, John Pawson, Thomas Hanby, and Joseph Taylor, to minister in Scotland; and I trust God will bless their ministrations, and show that He has sent them."

In performing these acts of ordination, it is presumed Mr. Wesley was perfectly justifiable from the necessity of the case, and the peculiar relation in which he stood to the people whose spiritual interests he had in view. They were his children in the Lord, begotten through the Gospel; deprived of the sacraments which Christ had instituted, and which they could not therefore neglect but at the hazard of their souls.

To meet their wants, in this crisis of their affairs, was his imperative duty ; and the only question was as to the manner in which this could be the most effectually done. With respect to America, he might have requested one of the English Prelates to ordain some of his Preachers ; but he had no hope from this quarter, having some time before asked the Bishop of London to ordain one, and been refused. In the present case it was requisite that the American Preachers in general should be ordained, or the necessities of the societies could not be met, scattered as they were over an immense tract of country : and what English Bishop could have access to them all ? or would lay his hands upon them, if they were even brought across the Atlantic for the purpose ? The King of Denmark is said to have directed his Bishops, in this emergency, to ordain for the American ministry such persons as they might deem qualified. But what affinity existed between the Danish Bishops and the American Methodists ? or between the American Methodists and Dr. Seabury, who returned to the United States about twelve months after Dr. Coke had gone thither invested with Mr. Wesley's authority ? Had any Bishops, whether English, Scottish, or Danish, appointed the Methodist Preachers of America to the sacred office, they would, of course, have expected to direct and control the proceedings of the men whom they had thus sanctioned ; and it is impossible to say how far this would have interfered with the free and apostolic labours to which these itinerant Evangelists had been accustomed, and which the Lord had so greatly blessed. "As our American brethren," says Mr. Wesley, "are now totally disentangled both from the State, and from the English hierarchy, we dare not entangle them again, either with the one or the other. They are now at full liberty simply to follow the Scriptures and the primitive church. And we judge it best that they should stand fast in the liberty wherewith God has so strangely made them free."* For a Bishop to ordain any Methodist Preachers for Scotland was out of the question. They must be ordained by Mr. Wesley himself, or not at all.

No principle has been more distinctly recognised in the Methodist Connexion, and more sacredly guarded, than this,

* Works, vol. xiii., p. 219.

—that personal piety, and an inward call of the Holy Spirit, are essential to the ministerial office. Every man therefore who is appointed to that office among them is required to give satisfactory evidence of unfeigned repentance, of a vital faith in Christ, and of the renewal of his heart by the power of the Holy Ghost; as well as that he possesses competent gifts as a Preacher, and is actually owned of God in the conversion of sinners from the error of their way. It is satisfactory to know that these principles were preserved in the Methodist ordinations for America. Dr. Seabury, the American Bishop, would have ordained those of the transatlantic Preachers whom he might deem duly qualified; but would he have submitted to such a searching examination respecting his own personal reconciliation with God, the regeneration of his heart, and the inward call of the Holy Spirit, as they had all undergone? and without this, how could they, with their principles and usages, accept ordination at his hands? It would have been a strange inconsistency to require spiritual-mindedness in one another, as essential to the pastoral office, and yet receive their appointment to that office from a man of whose spirituality they had not satisfactory proof. Mr. Charles Wesley, in his eagerness for Episcopacy, would have sacrificed the principles upon which the Methodists had hitherto invariably acted; but his sharp-sighted brother spared the American Preachers the pain and dishonour of such inconsistency in the most solemn transaction of their lives. It is not intended by these remarks to insinuate that Bishop Seabury was not a converted man. But in the absence of all direct evidence on the subject, it is gratifying to know that he was not employed in conferring the ministerial character upon the numerous and important body of Preachers belonging to the Methodist Church in America. In their case, as well as in that of their brethren in Great Britain, the doctrine of a special divine call to the Christian ministry, and given only to spiritual men, was preserved inviolate.

In ordaining Ministers for America and Scotland, Mr. Wesley did not think that his only justification arose from the necessity of the case. He believed that the act was right in itself, as being in full accordance with the doctrine of holy Scripture, and the practice of the early Christians. It had

long been his conviction that, in the apostolic churches, Presbyters and Bishops were of the same order, and therefore had an equal right to ordain. This principle is well known to have been avowed by Archbishop Cranmer, and by most of the Protestant Reformers on the European continent. The ordination of Ministers in the Church of Scotland, and in the Reformed Churches of Holland, France, and Switzerland, is performed not by Bishops, as a distinct order, but by Presbyters, such as Mr. Wesley himself was ; so that if his ordinations were invalid, such have been those of a large proportion of the Clergy of Protestant Christendom for the last three hundred years. And yet Mr. Wesley did not object to Episcopacy, as being in itself unlawful, or necessarily an evil. When several Ministers are united together, as in a national Church, or in a religious Connexion like that of the Methodists, there must be government ; and government supposes authority and subordination. What he objected to was the assumption, that diocesan Episcopacy, possessing the exclusive power of ordination and government, was instituted by Christ, and is binding in all ages upon the universal church. He learned from St. Paul, not only that the Presbyters might “rule,” but also “rule well ;” and that the Presbyters of the church at Ephesus were made Bishops by the Holy Ghost, and yet were known as Presbyters still. Lord King’s book on the “Constitution of the primitive Church,” and the “*Irenicum*” of Bishop Stillingfleet, were works to which he generally referred in proof of the correctness of his views. He did not deny that there has been, from the apostolic age, a succession of men to whom the name of Bishop was applied ; but he did deny that they had existed from the beginning, and by divine appointment, as a peculiar order, each of them having had a special ordination to the episcopal office, as essentially distinct from that of a Presbyter. Such a succession he declared no man could prove. If in the case of any Bishop such special ordination has been wanting, the succession for which the strict and rigid Episcopalians contend is vitiated ; the chain is broken ; and the ordinations that have been subsequently performed in the same line, though they should be even the acts of an Archbishop, are not a whit better than those of the Presbyter John Wesley ; for no man can communicate to another what he does not himself possess.

Few writers have expressed themselves with greater clearness on this subject than an episcopal Clergyman of a former age. The Rev. George Lawson, Rector of More, in Shropshire, in the reign of Charles II., one of the ablest theologians of that period, thus expresses himself:—"Though both the definition and the institution of a Bishop be uncertain, and there is no universal consent in respect of either, yet I think ■ constant Superintendent, not only over the people, but the Presbyters, within a reasonable precinct, if he be duly qualified and rightly chosen, may be lawful, and the place agreeable to Scripture: yet I do not conceive that this kind of Episcopacy is grounded upon any divine special precept of universal obligation, making it necessary for the being of a church, or essential constitution of Presbyters. Neither is there any scripture which determines the form, how such a Bishop, or any other, may be made. Yet it may be grounded upon general precepts of Scripture concerning decency, unity, order, and edification; but so that order and decency may be observed any other way, and unity and edification obtained by other means.

"But there are many in these our days which make Episcopacy, invested with the power of ordination at least of that necessity, that if Ministers are not ordained by them, they are no Ministers. They make the being of the ministry, and the power of the sacraments, to depend on them: and they further add, that without a succession of these Bishops we cannot maintain our ministry against the Church of Rome. But, 1. Where do they find in Scripture any special precept of universal and perpetual obligation, which doth determine that the imposition of hands of the Presbytery doth essentially constitute a Presbyter; and that the imposition of hands, if it did so, was invalid without an hierarchical Bishop, or a certain constant Superintendent, with them? And if they will have their doctrine to stand good, such a precept they must produce; which they have not done, which I am confident they cannot do. 2. As for succession of such Bishops, after so long a time, so many persecutions, and so great alterations in the churches of all nations, it is impossible to make it clear. Eusebius himself doth so preface his Catalogue of Bishops, that no rational man can so much as yield a probable assent unto him in that particular. But

suppose it had been far clearer, yet it could not merit the force of a divine testimony : it would have been only human, and could not have been believed but with a probable faith. Nay, Irenæus, Tertullian, Eusebius, and others, do not agree in the first and immediate successors of the Apostles ; no, not of the Roman Church. For Irenæus makes Clemens the third, whom Tertullian determines to be the first, from the Apostles. Yet they all agree in this, that the succession of persons, without succession of the same doctrine, was nothing. Tertullian confesseth that there were many churches which could not show the succession of persons, but of doctrine, from the Apostles ; and that was sufficient. And the succession of persons is so uncertain, that whosoever shall make either the being of a church, or the ministry, or the power of the sacraments, depend upon it, shall so offend Christ's little ones, and be guilty of such a scandal, as 'it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea.' The power of saving men's souls depends not upon succession of persons, according to human institutions, but upon the apostolical doctrine, accompanied by the divine Spirit. If upon the exercise of their ministerial power men are converted, find comfort in their doctrine and the sacraments, and at their end deliver up their souls unto God their Redeemer, and that with unspeakable joy ; this is a divine confirmation of their ministry, and the same more real and manifest than any personal succession.

“To maintain the ministry of England from their ordination by Bishops, and the Bishops by their consecration according to the canons of the Council of Carthage, was a good argument *ad hominem* ; yet it should be made good (as it may be) by far better arguments, and such as will serve the interest of other Protestant and Reformed Churches, who have sufficiently proved their ministry legal ; and by experience, through God's blessing upon their labours, have found it effectual. But suppose the succession of our English Episcopacy could be made good since the Reformation ; it is to little purpose, except you can justify the Popish succession up to the time of the Apostles ; which few will undertake, none (I fear) will perform. Divers reasons persuade me to believe they cannot do anything in this particular to purpose ; but among the rest this doth much sway with me,—that there

can be no succession without some distinct and determinate form of consecration and ordination ; and except this form be determined by special precept of Scripture, it cannot be of divine obligation. But any such special precept, which should prescribe the distinct forms of consecration and ordination, we find not at all. We have some examples of constituting church officers by election, with the imposition of hands and prayer ; yet this was common to all, even to Deacons. So that the very forms of making Bishops and Presbyters, as we find them, both in the English book of ordination, and the pontifical of Rome, are merely arbitrary, as having no particular ground, but at the best only a general rule in Scripture, which leaves liberty for several distinct forms.

“If any, notwithstanding all this, out of an high conceit of Episcopacy, will refuse communion with such Churches as have no Bishops, and yet are orthodox ; or will account those no Ministers, who are ordained by Presbyters without a Bishop ; let such take heed lest they prove guilty of schisms.” *

Nothing that Mr. John Wesley ever said or did gave his brother half so much offence as these ordinations. Charles adhered to the principle of “apostolical succession,” and of the divine appointment of three orders of Ministers : yet he could bear with patience to hear his brother assail these principles in theory, if he only kept the Methodists in union with the established Church. Whereas he imagined that from these ordinations separation was inevitable. The Church of England did not indeed exist either in the United States of America, or in Scotland ; but the principle of Presbyterian ordination among the Methodists was recognised ; and the men who had received such ordination from his brother, he saw, could, after his brother’s death, if not even before, ordain their brethren, and thus introduce the sacraments into the chapels generally, and draw away the societies from their parish churches. He had little confidence in Dr. Coke’s discretion, and thought that, on his return from America, he might by possibility ordain the whole body of the Preachers. The elements of separation appeared to him to be now

* Lawson’s “Model of Civil and Ecclesiastical Government,” pp. 234—238. Edit. 1689.

officially adopted, and at work ; the professions of union with the Church, which he and his brother had reiterated through life, he thought were violated ; their strenuous and persevering efforts to resist the spirit of Dissent were given up and neutralized ; the work of God irreparably injured ; and the name of Wesley dishonoured for ever ! Such were Charles's extreme views on the occasion ; and he mourned that he had not died before the arrival of that day.

Mr. John Wesley was perfectly satisfied with what he had done, as being matter of strict duty, from which the most beneficial results would arise ; but he knew the thoughts of his brother, and therefore spared his feelings with respect to the ordinations till they were actually performed. Charles was in Bristol when the ordinations for America took place ; but he was not aware of them till the service was ended. Nothing could interrupt the friendship of the brothers, hallowed as it was by religion, and cemented by their long-continued union in conducting a deep and extensive revival of religion. They had also a perfect conviction of each other's uprightness of purpose. But their correspondence at this time assumed an unwonted earnestness of reasoning and expostulation ; yet in no respect unworthy of Christian men, and aged Ministers. Under these circumstances of excitement Mr. Charles Wesley addressed the following letter to Dr. Chandler, an episcopal Clergyman, who was about to embark for the new world. It is deeply interesting, on account of the particulars which it contains concerning the writer's early history.

“ London, April 28th, 1785. Rev. and dear Sir,—As you are setting out for America, and I for a more distant country, I think it needful to leave with you some account of myself, and of my companions through life. At eight years old, in 1716, I was sent by my father, Rector of Epworth, to Westminster School, and placed under the care of my eldest brother Samuel, a strict Churchman, who brought me up in his own principles. My brother John, five years older than me, was then at the Charter-house. From Westminster College, in 1727, I was elected Student of Christ-church. My brother John was then Fellow of Lincoln.

“ My first year at College I lost in diversions. The next I set myself to study. Diligence led me into serious thinking.

I went to the weekly sacrament, and persuaded two or three young scholars to accompany me, and to observe the method of study prescribed by the statutes of the University. This gained me the harmless nickname of Methodist. In half a year my brother left his curacy at Epworth, and came to our assistance. We then proceeded regularly in our studies, and in doing what good we could to the bodies and souls of men.

“ I took my Master’s degree, and only thought of spending all my days at Oxford. But my brother, who always had the ascendant over me, persuaded me to accompany him and Mr. Oglethorpe to Georgia. I exceedingly dreaded entering into holy orders : but he overruled me here also, and I was ordained Deacon by the Bishop of Oxford, Dr. Potter, and the next Sunday, Priest, by the Bishop of London, Dr. Gibson.

“ Our only design was, to do all the good we could, as Ministers of the Church of England, to which we were firmly attached, both by education and by principle. My brother still thinks her the best-constituted national Church in the world.

“ In 1736 we arrived, as Missionaries, in Georgia. My brother took charge of Savannah, (and I of Frederica,) waiting for an opportunity of preaching to the Indians. I was, in the mean time, Secretary to Mr. Oglethorpe, and also Secretary for Indian affairs.

“ The hardship of lying on the ground, &c., soon threw me into a fever and dysentery, which in half a year forced me to return to England. My brother returned the next year. Still we had no plan, but to serve God, and the Church of England. The lost sheep of this fold were our principal care, not excluding any Christians, of whatever denomination, who were willing to add the power of godliness to their own particular form.

“ Our eldest brother, Samuel, was alarmed at our going on, and strongly expressed his fears of its ending in a separation from the Church. All our enemies prophesied the same. This confirmed us the more in our resolution to continue in our calling ; which we constantly avowed, both in public and in private ; by conversation, and preaching, and writing ; exhorting all our hearers to follow our example.

“ My brother drew up rules for our societies, one of which

was, constantly to attend the Church prayers, and sacrament. We both signed them, and likewise our hymn-books.

“When we were no longer permitted to preach in the churches, we preached (but never in church hours) in houses, or fields, and sent, or rather carried, from thence multitudes to church, who had never been there before. Our society in most places made the bulk of the congregation, both at prayers and sacrament.

“I never lost my dread of separation, or ceased to guard our societies against it. I frequently told them, ‘I am your servant as long as you remain in the Church of England; but no longer. Should you forsake her, you would renounce me.’

“Some of the lay-Preachers very early discovered an inclination to separate, which induced my brother to print his ‘Reasons against Separation.’ As often as it appeared, we beat down the schismatical spirit. If any one did leave the Church, at the same time he left our society. For near fifty years we kept the sheep in the fold; and having filled the number of our days, only waited to depart in peace.

“After our having continued friends for above SEVENTY years, and fellow-labourers for above FIFTY, can anything but death part us? I can scarcely yet believe it, that, in his eighty-second year, my brother, my old, intimate friend and companion, should have assumed the episcopal character, ordained Elders, consecrated a Bishop, and sent him to ordain our lay-Preachers in America! I was then in Bristol, at his elbow; yet he never gave me the least hint of his intention. How was he surprised into so rash an action? He certainly persuaded himself that it was right.

“Lord Mansfield told me last year, that ordination was separation. This my brother does not and will not see; or that he has renounced the principles and practice of his whole life; that he has acted contrary to all his declarations, protestations, and writings, robbed his friends of their boasting, and left an indelible blot on his name, as long as it shall be remembered!

“Thus our partnership here is dissolved, but not our friendship. I have taken him for better for worse, till death do us part; or rather, re-unite us in love inseparable. I have lived on earth a little too long, who have lived to see

this evil day. But I shall very soon be taken from it, in steadfast faith that the Lord will maintain his own cause, and carry on his own work, and fulfil his promise to his church, 'Lo, I am with you always, even to the end!'

"Permit me to subscribe myself, Rev. and dear Sir,

"Your faithful and obliged servant and brother.

"P. S. What will become of those poor sheep in the wilderness, the American Methodists? How have they been betrayed into a separation from the Church of England, which their Preachers and they no more intended than the Methodists here! Had they had patience a little longer, they would have seen a real Bishop in America, consecrated by three Scotch Bishops, who have their consecration from the English Bishops, and are acknowledged by them as the same with themselves. There is therefore not the least difference betwixt the members of Bishop Seabury's Church, and the members of the Church of England. He told me, he looked upon the Methodists in America as sound members of the Church, and was ready to ordain any of their Preachers whom he should find duly qualified. His ordinations would be indeed genuine, valid, and episcopal.

"But what are your poor Methodists now? Only a new sect of Presbyterians. And after my brother's death, which is now so near, what will be their end? They will lose all their influence and importance; they will turn aside to vain janglings; they will settle again upon their lees; and, like other sects of Dissenters, come to nothing!"

Such were the distressing feelings of Mr. Charles Wesley in reference to his brother's ordinations for America. Of his perfect sincerity no doubt can be entertained. As a poet he was a prophet by general consent; but never were unfortunate vaticinations more completely disproved by time, than those which he uttered on this occasion. Nearly sixty years have now elapsed since those ordinations were performed, and the "name" of John Wesley, so far from being dishonoured by "an indelible blot," is still "as ointment poured forth," and was never more respected. The American Methodists, so far from "losing their influence and importance," from "turning aside to vain janglings," from "settling upon their lees," and from "coming to nothing," in consequence of the ordinations which were given to them,

have from that time gone on to prosper beyond all former example ; so that at this day they are the most numerous body in the Union. Their Church has indeed violated the theory of a succession of Bishops as a distinct order from the Apostles. It has an Episcopacy which was originated by a Presbyter ; but it has not been a whit the less salutary on this account. As an instrument of extensive spiritual good to the souls of men, it appears to immense advantage when compared with the American Episcopacy with which Bishop Seabury stood connected. In the Methodist Church the great design of the sacraments, of preaching, and of ecclesiastical discipline, has been answered. The members are undeniably justified through faith in the blood of Jesus, and are sanctified by the power of the Holy Ghost. Husbands and wives, parents and children, the aged and the young, the rich and the poor, the master and the servant, have exhibited, and still exhibit, both in life and death, the piety, the zeal, the charity, the justice, the holiness, peace, and joy of apostolical Christianity, which Mr. Charles Wesley has described in his incomparable hymns. Could he have witnessed the triumphant extension of the work of God, in connexion with the ordinations, which at the time almost broke his heart, he would have smiled at his honest mistake, and have wiped away his needless tears.

Those tears, however, for the time were bitter, and copiously shed, as the following letter, which he addressed to his brother, will show. It is dated some months after that to Dr. Chandler ; and, being written in all the confidence of brotherly friendship, contains stronger expressions than he would use to a stranger.

“ Bristol, August 14th, 1785. Dear Brother,—I have been reading over again your ‘ Reasons against a Separation,’ printed in 1758, and your Works ; and entreat you, in the name of God, and for Christ’s sake, to read them again yourself, with previous prayer, and stop, and proceed no farther, till you receive an answer to your inquiry, ‘ Lord, what wouldest *thou* have me to do ? ’

“ Every word of your eleven pages deserves the deepest consideration : not to mention my testimony and hymns. Only the seventh I could wish you to read,—a prophecy which I pray God may never come to pass.

“Near thirty years, since then, you have stood against the importunate solicitations of your Preachers, who have scarcely at last prevailed. I was your natural ally, and faithful friend; and while you continued faithful to yourself, we two could chase a thousand.

“But when once you began ordaining in America, I knew, and you knew, that your Preachers here would never rest till you ordained them. You told me they would separate by and by. The Doctor tells us the same. His Methodist episcopal Church in Baltimore was intended to beget a Methodist episcopal Church here. You know he comes, armed with your authority, to make us all Dissenters. One of your sons assured me, that not a Preacher in London would refuse orders from the Doctor.

“Alas! what trouble are you preparing for yourself, as well as for me, and for your oldest, truest, best friends! Before you have quite broken down the bridge, stop, and consider! If your sons have no regard for you, have some regard for yourself. Go to your grave in peace: at least, suffer me to go first, before this ruin is under your hand. So much, I think, you owe to my father, to my brother, and to me, as to stay till I am taken from the evil. I am on the brink of the grave. Do not push me in, or embitter my last moments. Let us not leave an indelible blot on our memory; but let us leave behind us the name and character of honest men.

“This letter is a debt to our parents, and to our brother, as well as to you, and to

“Your faithful friend.”

To this very earnest letter Mr. John Wesley returned the following answer. He also published it in the Arminian Magazine, but without the name of the person to whom it was addressed. The line of poetry which it contains is Charles's own. It occurs in his Elegy on the death of Mr. Jones.

“Plymouth, August 19th, 1785. Dear Brother,—I will tell you my thoughts with all simplicity, and wait for better information. If you agree with me, well: if not, we can, as Mr. Whitefield used to say, agree to disagree.

“For these forty years I have been in doubt concerning that question, What obedience is due to

‘Heathenish Priests, and mitred infidels?’

I have from time to time proposed my doubts to the most pious and sensible Clergymen I knew. But they gave me no satisfaction. Rather they seemed to be puzzled as well as me.

“Obedience I always paid to the Bishops, in obedience to the laws of the land. But I cannot see that I am under any obligation to obey them farther than those laws require.

“It is in obedience to these laws that I have never exercised in England the power which I believe God has given me. I firmly believe I am a scriptural *Ἐπίσκοπος*,* as much as any man in England, or in Europe: for the uninterrupted succession I know to be a fable, which no man ever did or can prove. But this does in nowise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England, from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago. I still attend all the ordinances of the Church, at all opportunities; and I constantly and earnestly advise all that are connected with me so to do. When Mr. Smyth pressed us to separate from the Church, he meant, ‘Go to church no more.’ And this was what I meant twenty-seven years ago, when I persuaded our brethren not to separate from the Church.

“But here another question occurs, ‘What is the Church of England?’ It is not all the people of England. Papists and Dissenters are no part thereof. It is not all the people of England, except Papists and Dissenters. Then we should have a glorious Church indeed! No: according to our twentieth Article, a particular church is ‘a congregation of faithful people,’ (*cætus credentium* are the words of our Latin edition,) ‘among whom the word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered.’ Here is a true logical definition, containing both the essence and the properties of a church. What then, according to this definition, is the Church of England?’ Does it mean all the believers in England, (except the Papists and Dissenters,) who have the word of God and the sacraments duly administered among them? I fear this does not come up to your idea of the Church of England. Well, what more do you include in the phrase? ‘Why, all the believers that adhere to the doctrine

* Bishop, or Overseer.

and discipline established by the Convocation under Queen Elizabeth.' Nay, that discipline is well-nigh vanished away; and the doctrine both you and I adhere to.

"All those reasons against a separation from the Church, in this sense, I subscribe to still. What then are you frightened at? I no more separate from it now than I did in the year 1758. I submit still (though sometimes with a doubting conscience) to 'mitred infidels.' I do indeed vary from them in some points of doctrine, and in some points of discipline; (by preaching abroad, for instance, by praying extempore, and by forming societies;) but not a hair's breadth further than I believe to be meet, right, and my bounden duty. I walk still by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly. It is not likely I should. The high-day of my blood is over. If you will go on hand in hand with me, do. But do not hinder me, if you will not help. Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better. However, with or without help, I creep on: and as I have been hitherto, so I trust I shall always be,

"Your affectionate friend and brother."

To this letter Mr. Charles Wesley returned the following reply:—

"Marybone, Sept. 8th, 1785. Dear Brother,—I will tell you my thoughts with the same simplicity. There is no danger of our quarrelling; for the second blow makes the quarrel; and you are the last man upon earth whom I would wish to quarrel with.

"That juvenile line of mine,

Heathenish Priests, and mitred infidels,

I disown, renounce, and with shame recant. I never knew of more than one 'mitred infidel,' and for him I took Mr. Law's word.

"I do not understand what obedience to the Bishops you dread. They have let us alone, and left us to act just as we pleased, for these fifty years. At present some of them are quite friendly toward us, particularly toward you. The churches are all open to you; and never could there be less pretence for a separation.

"That you are a scriptural *Ἐπίσκοπος*, or Overseer, I do not

dispute. And so is every Minister who has the cure of souls. Neither need we dispute whether the uninterrupted succession be fabulous, as you believe, or real, as I believe; or whether Lord King be right or wrong.

“Your definition of the Church of England is the same in prose with mine in verse. By the way, read over my ‘Epistle,’ to oblige me, and tell me you have read it, and likewise your own ‘Reasons.’

“You write, ‘All those reasons against a Separation from the Church, I subscribe to still. What then are you frightened at? I no more separate from it than I did in the year 1758. I submit still to its Bishops. I do indeed vary from them in some points of discipline; (by preaching abroad, for instance, praying extempore, and by forming societies;)’ [might you not add, and by ordaining?] ‘I still walk by the same rule I have done for between forty and fifty years. I do nothing rashly.’

“If I could prove your actual separation, I would not; neither wish to see it proved by any other. But do you not allow that the Doctor has separated? Do you not know and approve of his avowed design and resolution to get all the Methodists of the three kingdoms into a distinct, compact body? a new episcopal Church of his own? Have you seen his ordination sermon? Is the high-day of his blood over? Does he do nothing rashly? Have you not made yourself the author of all his actions? I need not remind you, *qui facit per alium facit per se*.

“I must not leave unanswered your surprising question, ‘What then are you frightened at?’ At the Doctor’s rashness, and your supporting him in his ambitious pursuits; at an approaching schism, as causeless and unprovoked as the American rebellion; at your own eternal disgrace, and all those frightful evils which your ‘Reasons’ describe.

“‘If you will go on hand in hand with me, do.’ I do go, or rather creep on, in the old way in which we set out together, and trust to continue in it till I finish my course.

“‘Perhaps if you had kept close to me, I might have done better.’ When you took that fatal step at Bristol, I kept as close to you as close could be; for I was all the time at your elbow. You might certainly have done better, if you had taken me into your council.

“I thank you for your intention to remain my friend.

Herein my heart is as your heart. Whom God hath joined, let not man put asunder. We have taken each other for better for worse, till death do us—part? no: but unite eternally. Therefore in the love which never faileth, I am

“Your affectionate friend and brother.”

On the 13th of September Mr. John Wesley returned the following answer:—

“Dear Brother,—I see no use of you and me disputing together; for neither of us is likely to convince the other. You say, I separate from the Church. I say, I do not. Then let it stand.

“Your verse is a sad truth. I see fifty times more of England than you do; and I find few exceptions to it.

“I believe Dr. Coke is as free from ambition as from covetousness. He has done nothing rashly, that I know. But he has spoken rashly, which he retracted the moment I spoke to him of it. To publish as his present thoughts, what he had before retracted, was not fair play. He is now such a right hand to me as Thomas Walsh was. If you will not or cannot help me yourself, do not hinder those that can and will. I must and will save as many souls as I can while I live, without being careful about what may *possibly be* when I die.

“I pray do not confound the intellects of the people in London. You may thereby a little weaken my hands, but you will greatly weaken your own.”

The correspondence of the brothers on this subject was concluded by the subjoined answer by Charles:—

“London, Sept. 19th, 1785. Dear Brother,—I did not say, you separate from the Church; but I did say, ‘If I could prove it, I would not.’

“That ‘sad truth’ is not a new truth. You saw it when you expressed in your ‘Reasons’ such tenderness of love for the unconverted Clergy.

“Of your second Thomas Walsh we had better talk than write.

“How ‘confound their intellects?’ how ‘weaken your hands?’ I know nothing which I do to prevent the *possible* separation, but pray. God forbid I should sin against Him by ceasing to pray for the Church of England, and for you, while my breath remains in me! I am

“Your affectionate brother.”

This correspondence between the brothers is particularly valuable, as illustrating the character of both. Their love for each other was strong and tender; and if anything could have restrained John from performing his acts of ordination, it was his regard for Charles: but such was his conviction of duty, that he chose rather to grieve the dearest friend that he had in the world than refrain from doing that to which he believed himself providentially called in the peculiar exigency of his spiritual children.

When Mr. John Wesley professed to remain in union with the Church of England, he did not mean that his conduct was canonically regular; for the reverse of this was notoriously the fact. He deviated from the order of the Church by the erection of chapels over which the English Prelates had no control; by the employment of Preachers on whose heads episcopal hands had not been laid; by forming religious societies everywhere, independently of the Clergy in whose parishes the members of those societies lived; as well as by field-preaching, and extemporary prayer. But at the same time he attended the religious services of the Church, and urged all his societies to follow his example. He now further deviated from the order of the Church by ordaining men for the administration of the sacraments in America and Scotland; but this did not dissolve the kind of union which he professed, and which he had maintained for nearly fifty years. That Lord Mansfield, speaking as a Lawyer, should pronounce the act of ordination, when performed by a Presbyter, without the concurrence of a Bishop, to be separation from the Church of England, considering the nature of its constitution, is not at all surprising. Such it was, *in a sense*, and such had been Mr. Wesley's acts from the year 1738. In that year both the brothers began to act independently of the ecclesiastical authorities. Yet John, as well as Charles, loved the doctrine of the Church, delighted in her worship, and never departed from her order, but when he deemed it his absolute duty, the eternal interests of mankind being concerned. When his brother first heard of the ordinations, he regarded them as separation; but it is evident, from the altered tone of his correspondence, that his views were at least partially changed. "If I could prove you to have separated," says he, "I would not."

It is easy to perceive that Mr. Charles Wesley's opposition to his brother's ordinations was rather a matter of feeling than of reason and argument. He proposed nothing that was feasible for meeting the wants of the American and Scottish Methodists; and in expostulating with John he pleads the respect which was due to their late father and elder brother. He forgot that the plea of filial and fraternal regard applied with equal force against himself. Their father and brother were canonically regular, and would have condemned all that the brothers had been doing for near fifty years. Had Charles acted upon their principles, he would never have preached at Moorfields and Kennington-common; he would never have instructed and warned the neglected Romanists of Ireland, the Cornish miners, the colliers of Kingswood, the keelmen of Newcastle, or the outcasts of Staffordshire. The Foundery would never have been opened by him and his brother; and, according to all human probability, ten thousand souls to whom he and his brother were the instruments of salvation would have been lost for ever. Family honour is of no account when compared with the interests of redeemed men, and the extension of Christ's kingdom. The truest respect for their deceased father and brother was to act in full accordance with those impressive views of religion which are disclosed to the minds of disembodied spirits, who see everything, not in the dim and flickering light of time, but in the full blaze of eternity.

In this correspondence, it will be observed, Mr. Charles Wesley, complaining that he had not been taken into the whole of his brother's councils, says, "I was your natural ally." John rejoins, "If you had kept close to me, I might have done better." Charles evades this gentle reproof, by pleading that he was at his brother's elbow in Bristol when the ordinations for America were performed. He knew that this was not what was meant. For thirty years he had left his brother to regulate the Preachers and societies as he could; confining his own ministrations chiefly to London and Bristol, and not even attending the Conferences with regularity.

Though he evaded the reproof at the time, he evidently felt its force, and therefore took his place in the Conference of 1786, which was held in Bristol. The occasion was very

important. Dr. Coke had returned from the United States, where he had fulfilled his charge, and was about to repair to the provinces of British America, with a band of Missionaries, whom he was to fix in the most destitute and promising localities. At this Conference, Mr. John Wesley, unconvinced by his brother's letters and verbal remonstrances, ordained six or seven others of his Preachers to administer the sacraments, some of whom went to Scotland, and others to the West Indies.* He was urged to ordain a Preacher for some place in Yorkshire; but this he declined; yet he made and published the following important concession on the subject of public service in Church hours on the Lord's day:—

“Perhaps there is one part of what I wrote some time since, which requires a little further explanation. In what cases do we allow of service in Church hours? I answer,

“1. When the Minister is a notoriously wicked man.

“2. When he preaches Arian or any equally pernicious doctrine.

“3. When there are not churches in the town sufficient to contain half the people. And,

“4. When there is no church at all within two or three miles. And we advise every one who preaches in the Church hours, to read the Psalms and Lessons, with part of the Church prayers; because we apprehend this will endear the Church service to our brethren, who probably would be prejudiced against it, if they heard none but extemporary prayer.”†

The spirit which prevailed in this Conference was every way satisfactory. About eighty Preachers were present, and their general unanimity afforded Mr. John Wesley the richest gratification. In his printed Journal he says, “We met every day at six and nine in the morning, and at two in the afternoon. On Tuesday and on Wednesday morning the characters of the Preachers were considered, whether they were already admitted or not. On Thursday in the afternoon we permitted any of the society to be present, and weighed what was said about separating from the Church: but we all determined to continue therein, without one

* Bradburn's “Are the Methodists Dissenters?” p. 12. Second edition.

† Minutes of Conference, vol. i., p. 191.

dissenting voice : and I doubt not but this determination will stand, at least till I am removed into a better world. On Friday and Saturday most of our temporal business was settled. Sunday, I preached in the room morning and evening ; and in the afternoon at Kingswood, where there is rather an increase than a decrease in the work of God.

“ Monday, the Conference met again, and concluded on Tuesday morning. Great had been the expectations of many, that we should have had warm debates ; but, by the mercy of God, we had none at all : everything was transacted with great calmness ; and we parted, as we met, in peace and love.”

At this time Mr. Charles Wesley cultivated the friendship of Mr. Latrobe, the intelligent and liberal-minded Minister of the Moravian Church, then resident in England. He appears to have shown him the manuscript poetic Epistles which, many years before, he had written to Count Zinzendorf, and other members of that community, containing strong censures upon the tenets which the Count inculcated, and for which he thought the Moravian Church should not now be held responsible. Miss Wesley, with the concurrence of her father, frequently attended the Moravian chapel ; and he wished to bring about a better understanding between that Church and the Methodist body. Before the Conference was concluded he addressed a letter to Mr. Latrobe, in which he says, “ My brother, and I, and the Preachers were unanimous for continuing in the old ship. The Preachers of a Dissenting spirit will probably, after our death, set up for themselves, and draw away disciples after them. An old Baptist Minister, forty years ago, told me, he looked on the Methodists as a seminary for the Dissenters. My desire and design, from the beginning to this day, is, to leave them in the lap of their mother.

“ The Bishops might, if they pleased, save the largest and soundest part of them back into the Church ; perhaps to leaven the whole lump, as Archbishop Potter said to me. *But I fear, betwixt you and me, their Lordships care for none of these things.* Still I should hope, if God raised up but one primitive Bishop, and commanded the porter to open the door.

“ The friendly intercourse of your society and ours might

be another likely means of preserving our children in their calling. My brother is very well inclined to such a correspondence. So is (would you think it?) the writer of those Epistles.

“Should I live to meet my brother in London, he will desire a conference with you. You will first settle your preliminary article, and then venture, I should think, to converse with him and me. If our Lord is pleased to use us as peacemakers, under Him, we may yet do something toward preventing any separation at all.

“The great evil which I have dreaded for near fifty years is a schism. If I live to see that evil prevented, and also to see the two sticks (the Moravian and English Church) become one in our Saviour’s hand, I shall then say, ‘Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!’”

From this letter it is manifest, that Mr. Charles Wesley’s jealousies of the Preachers arose principally from his want of intercourse with them. They were scattered over the country where he never went; and from the Dissenting prejudices of a few, he judged of the rest. Whereas when he met eighty of them in this Conference, he found them, with few exceptions, one in mind and heart with himself and his honoured brother. That they were not inclined to violent measures, is demonstrated by their Christian moderation when he and his brother were no more. The government of the Connexion devolved upon them at the period of the French Revolution; and under all the excitement connected with that event, and the passion for change which it created, the body of Methodist Preachers maintained a steady adherence to the principles in which they had been nurtured by their venerated father in the Gospel. Instead of seeking ordination from Dr. Coke or any other man, and generally proceeding to the administration of the sacraments, as Mr. Charles Wesley apprehended, the majority of them firmly withstood all attempts to innovate upon their original plan, and denied the sacraments to the societies till all further resistance was unavailing. The Preachers in general sought no ordination at the hands of Dr. Coke; nor did the Doctor, after Mr. Wesley’s death, attempt to introduce any of those changes in the body which Mr. Charles Wesley feared.

He still clave to his favourite notion, that in the national

Church “a Bishop” of the “primitive” stamp would arise, and by the imposition of his hands sanction the ministrations of the Methodist Preachers. That they were called of God, he had the fullest conviction; and earnestly did he desire that some episcopal “porter” would “open the door” for their admission to what he deemed the regular pastorate. For many years he prayed for this; and when no answer appeared, he trusted that their continued exclusion would be overruled for good. He deprecated separation, as an evil in itself, and lamented the circumstances which rendered it unavoidable.

Yet there was a singular discrepancy between his theory of Churchmanship, and his conduct. For thirty years he made more noise on the subject of the continued union of the Methodists with the Church, than any man of the age; and all this while he was, beyond comparison, the greatest practical separatist in the whole Connexion. Mr. John Wesley spent most of his time in travelling through Great Britain and Ireland, often preaching twice every day, and two or three times on the Sabbath. Rarely, however, did he preach in Church hours, except when he officiated for a brother Clergyman. He so arranged his public services as to attend the church where he happened to be; and he pressed the people that heard him to accompany him thither. Many of the Itinerant Preachers pursued the same course. They preached to their own congregations at an early hour on the Sunday morning, at noon, and in the evening; and in the forenoon and afternoon they were present, with their people, at the service of the Church. This was the recognised plan of Methodist practice; and though several refused to conform to it, especially where the Clergy were unfriendly or immoral, yet others were even zealous for it, especially where the Clergy were kind and tolerant.

But this was not the state of things in London, under the administration of Mr. Charles Wesley. He preached twice during Church hours every Sabbath, and indulged the society with a weekly sacrament at their own places of worship; so that they had no opportunity of attending their several churches, nor any motive to attend them. He conducted divine worship indeed according to the order of the Church of England, except that he used extemporary prayer, and

sang his own beautiful hymns ; but he and the society had otherwise no more connexion with the established Church than any Dissenting Minister and congregation had. He was under no episcopal control ; the chapels in which he officiated were licensed by no Bishop ; and the Clergy in whose parishes those chapels were situated were never consulted as to the time and manner of divine service. The uneasiness which frequently arose in some of the country societies took its origin in part from this state of things. They wished to be upon an equality with their metropolitan brethren ; and they were never satisfied, either during the life-time of the Wesleys, or after their death, till this was conceded to them.

In the principal Methodist chapels in Great Britain and Ireland, the Lord's supper is now administered, and divine service is conducted during Church hours. Some persons speak of this as an absolute departure from Wesleyan Methodism. It is a departure from the general practice of original Methodism ; but it is an assimilation of Methodism in the country, to Methodism as it existed in London under the personal administration of Mr. Charles Wesley, with the full concurrence and co-operation of his brother. The only difference is, that the sacraments are now administered by men who have received a Presbyterian appointment to the sacred office ; whereas in London they were always administered by episcopal Clergymen. Mr. Charles Wesley thought that when he and his brother were dead, the Preachers would split into endless divisions. The fact is, their union, under the "Deed of Declaration," has been far more complete than it ever was before ; and they unanimously agree to walk in the path which was marked out by his example. They have departed from Charles Wesley's theory, but they follow his practice. They love his memory, and smile at his gloomy forebodings, which time has demonstrated to have had no just foundation.

Great as was Mr. Charles Wesley's affection for the established Church, no man had a keener perception of her blemishes than he ; and while he censured his brother for not rising to what he considered the true standard of Churchmanship, he himself often spoke of the Clergy, not excepting even the Bishops, in language of far greater severity than his

brother ever used. For the preaching of unordained men, he was a strenuous advocate; and he had a solemn persuasion that the Methodist Preachers were called of God to labour in the word and doctrine. He regarded them as a means of reviving decayed piety in the land, and of rousing the Clergy to a due sense of their responsibilities. With as much decision as his brother, he spurned canonical regularity when it interfered with the salvation of souls, by imposing silence upon unordained men. It would be unjust to his memory, not to give a few specimens of his manner of writing on these subjects.

Eldad, they said, and Medad, there,
Irregularly bold,
By Moses uncommission'd, dare
A separate meeting hold!
And still whom none but Heaven will own,
Men whom the world decry,
Men authorized by God alone,
Presume to prophesy!

How often have I blindly done
What zealous Joshua did,
Impatient to the rulers run,
And cried, "My Lords, forbid!
Silence the schismatics; constrain
Their thoughts with ours to' agree;
And sacrifice the souls of men
To idol unity!"

Moses, the Minister of God,
Rebukes our partial love,
Who envy at the gifts bestow'd
On those we disapprove.
We do not our own spirit know,
Who wish to see suppress'd
The men that Jesu's Spirit show,
The men whom God hath bless'd.

Shall we the Spirit's course restrain,
Or quench the heavenly fire?
Let God his messengers ordain,
And whom He will inspire.
Blow as he list, the Spirit's choice
Of instruments we bless;
We will, if Christ be preach'd, rejoice,
And wish the word success.

“ Is Saul also among the Prophets ? ”

Yes ; if the Lord his mind reveal,
 Even to the meanest of the throng :
 Their Father sends by whom He will,
 And teaches babes the Gospel song ;
 Not to the Prophets' schools confined ;
 He gives to the unlearn'd his word ;
 And, lo, they now declare his mind,
 And husbandmen proclaim their Lord.

Master, for thine we cannot own
 The workmen who themselves create,
 Their call receive from man alone,
 As licensed servants of the State,
 Who to themselves the honour take,
 Nor tarry till thy Spirit move,
 But serve for filthy lucre's sake
 The souls they neither feed nor love.

In vain in their own lying words
 The haughty self-deceivers trust ;
 The harvest's and the vineyard's lords
 In vain their true succession boast :
 Their lawful property they claim
 The apostolic ministry ;
 But only labourers in name,
 They prove they are not sent by thee.

What hypocrite so base as he,
 The slave of sloth and avarice,
 Ambition, pride, and cruelty,
 Of every lust, and every vice ;
 Yet still audacious to declare
 Himself—a Christian Minister !

His life of soft luxurious ease,
 Of sports and sensible delights,
 Of mirth and riotous excess,
 Revelling days and frantic nights,
 In fellowship with torturing fiends,
 In endless lamentations, ends !

Venerable gamesters play,
 Right venerable men,
 Each contends the goodliest prey,
 The largest share, to gain ;
 Eager each the whole to' engross,
 As Churchmen never satisfied,
 First they nail him to the cross,
 And then his spoils divide.

We will not chide thy followers, Lord,
 Distinct from us who preach thy word,
 Who devils in thy name expel,
 And pluck poor sinners out of hell :
 We dare not enviously deny
 Their inward call to prophesy,
 While faith is to their hearers given,
 And God himself sent down from heaven.

Angels, saints, and men are glad
 At a prodigal's return ;
 Envious Pharisees are sad,
 With the powers of darkness mourn :
 Scribes, in every age the same,
 Thus their *true succession* prove,
 By their murmurings proclaim,
 " God we neither fear nor love."

The evangelic Minister
 Should above others have
 A zeal for God, an active care,
 Immortal souls to save :
 But if his duty he neglect,
 His long-offended Lord
 The slothful servant will reject,
 And quite revoke the word.

The word, the care, the labouring zeal,
 He *doth* to others give,
 And laymen now of Jesus tell,
 And urge us to believe :
 Unlearn'd they rise, and scale the sky,
 While Scribes, who all things know,
 Live ignorant of Christ, and die,
 And find their place below.

Who but the Holy Ghost can make
 A genuine Gospel Minister,
 A Bishop bold to undertake
 Of precious souls the awful care?
 The Holy Ghost alone can move
 A sinner sinners to convert,
 Infuse the apostolic love,
 And bless him with a Pastor's heart:

Not all the hands of all mankind
 Can constitute one Overseer ;
 But spirited with Jesu's mind,
 The heavenly messengers appear :
 They follow close with zeal divine,
 The Bishop great, the Shepherd good,
 And cheerfully their lives resign,
 To save the purchase of his blood.

Extracts of a similar kind, and of still greater severity, might easily be multiplied ; but these will suffice to show the writer's habits of thought on the subjects to which they refer. He was a Churchman, and acknowledged an "apostolic succession ;" but he also acknowledged a Scribe-and-Pharisee succession, which repines and mourns at the conversion of sinners, unless the work be carried on precisely in the manner which men prescribe : a "succession" which would rather see mankind live in ignorance and sin, and even perish by thousands, than that they should be sanctified and brought to heaven by what is called an "irregular" and "unauthorized" instrumentality. Wicked Ministers, whatever hands had been laid upon them, he declared to be no servants of the living God.

It is not therefore surprising, that, as Mr. Charles Wesley drew near the close of life, he became less hostile to his brother's ordinations. As long as he was able to labour, he continued to serve the Methodist congregations with his wonted faithfulness. Within less than twelve months of his death, writing to his brother, he says, "I served West-street chapel on Friday, and yesterday. Next Saturday I propose to sleep in your bed. Samuel Bradburn and I shall not disagree.

"Stand to your own proposal. Let us agree to differ. I leave America and Scotland to your latest thoughts and recognitions." "Keep your authority while you live ; and

after your death *detur digniori*, or, rather, *dignioribus*.* You cannot settle the succession."

Before Mr. John Wesley closed his life he saw, as every intelligent observer must have seen, that the sacraments in their own chapels, and administered by their own Preachers, could not be permanently withheld from the whole of the Methodist societies in England. Earnestly indeed did he desire that they should rather attend these ordinances in their several parish churches; and he did everything in his power to secure this point; but he could not succeed. The thing was in itself impossible. The people knew his wishes, and most of them deferred to his authority; but there were cases in which he could not even press them to frequent the ministrations of the Clergy.

In the year 1781 he received a letter from five members of his society at Baildon, in the west of Yorkshire, soliciting his advice on the subject of their attendance at church. Such was the doctrine taught there, that they were rather injured than benefited by it. He knew the men to be not captious, but "of a loving spirit, of an unblamable conversation;" and their communication, says he, "is worthy of the greater regard, as they speak, not only in their own name, but in the name of many who wish to have a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards man." In reply to their request he says, "It is a delicate as well as important point, on which I hardly know how to answer. I cannot lay down any general rule. All I can say at present is, If it does not hurt you, hear them: if it does, refrain. Be determined by your own conscience. Let every man in particular act as he is fully persuaded in his own mind."†

In less than five years afterwards he says, in a letter to his brother, "The last time I was at Scarborough I earnestly exhorted the people to go to church; and I went myself. But the wretched Minister preached such a sermon, that I could not in conscience advise them to hear him any more."

These were not solitary cases, nor could they be regarded as matters of indifference. They pressed heavily upon Mr. Wesley, who now began to feel the infirmities of age; for the

* "Let it be given to *one* who is more worthy of it; or, rather, to *those* who are more worthy of it."

† Works, vol. xiii., pp. 211, 212.

result to which they inevitably led was too manifest. He deemed it requisite, therefore, repeatedly to refer to the subject in his monthly Magazine. In the autumn of 1788, speaking of the entire separation of Mr. Ingham's and Lady Huntingdon's people from the Church, he says, with regard to his own societies, "Such a separation I have always declared against; and certainly it will not take place (if ever it does) while I live. But a kind of separation has already taken place, and will inevitably spread, though by slow degrees. Those Ministers, so called, who neither live nor preach the Gospel, I dare not say are sent of God. Where one of these is settled, many of the Methodists dare not attend his ministry; so, if there be no other church in the neighbourhood, they go to church no more. This is the case in a few places already, and it will be the case in more: and no one can justly blame me for this; neither is it contrary to any of my professions."

At the close of the following year he again adverts to the perplexing subject. Having mentioned the efforts which had been formerly made to effect a separation, and which he and his brother had laboured to suppress, he adds, "The grand argument (which in some particular cases must be acknowledged to have weight) was this: 'The Minister of the parish wherein we dwell neither lives nor preaches the Gospel. He walks in the way to hell himself, and teaches his flock to do the same. Can you advise them to attend his preaching?' I cannot advise them to it. 'What then can they do on the Lord's day, suppose no other church be near? Do you advise them to go to a Dissenting meeting, or to meet in their own preaching-house?' Where this is really the case, I cannot blame them if they do. Although, therefore, I earnestly oppose the general separation of the Methodists from the Church, yet I cannot condemn such a partial separation in this particular case. I believe, to separate thus far from these miserable wretches, who are the scandal of our Church and nation, would be for the honour of our Church, as well as to the glory of God."

In accordance with these principles, and with an existing state of things which he deeply regretted, but could not control, Mr. Wesley ordained three of his Preachers to administer the sacraments in England, wherever they might deem it

necessary; but in a sermon on the sacred office, which he published about the same time, he strongly urged upon the body of the Preachers the duty of confining themselves to preaching the word of life, as their original and special calling, and to abstain from administering the sacraments altogether. The three men whom he selected from their brethren, and invested with what he considered the full ministerial character, were Mr. Alexander Mather, Thomas Rankin, and Henry Moore. The following is a copy of the certificate of ordination given to Mr. Moore, as published by himself:—

“Know all men by these presents, that I, John Wesley, late Fellow of Lincoln College, in Oxford, Presbyter of the Church of England, did, on the day of the date hereof, by the imposition of my hands and prayer, (being assisted by other ordained Ministers,) set apart Henry Moore, for the office of a Presbyter in the church of God: a man whom I judge qualified to feed the flock of Christ, and to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s supper, according to the usage of the Church of England; and as such I do hereby recommend him to all whom it may concern. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal this twenty-seventh day of February, in the year of our Lord 1789.

“JOHN WESLEY.

“Present and assisting,

“JAMES CREIGHTON, } Presbyters of the Church
“PEARL DICKENSON, } of England.”

With this document and the facts connected with it before him, the reader will perceive what credit is due to the Messrs. Wilberforce and Dr. Pusey, in their statements respecting Mr. Wesley and his Preachers. The brothers assert, in the Life of their father, “John Wesley was no Dissenter, nor were any of his Preachers suffered during his life-time to attempt to administer the sacraments of the Church.”* The Oxford Professor avers, with equal confidence, “that Wesley reluctantly took the step of ordaining at all; that he meant those whom he ordained to be subordinate auxiliaries to the ministry; and that, to the last, he refused, in the strongest terms, his consent that those thus ordained should take upon

* Vol. i., p. 248.

them to administer the sacraments. He felt that it exceeded his powers, and so inhibited it, however it might diminish the numbers of the society he had formed.” *

Thus it is that grave men, whose very office binds them to attach a peculiar sacredness to truth, fearlessly dogmatize on subjects which they never took the pains to understand! Mr. Wesley expressly appointed about twenty of his Preachers to perform those acts which these Clergymen tell the world he absolutely forbade them to meddle with! thus dealing their censures blindfold, regardless of the injury they may inflict. With a large class of writers it seems to be now an admitted principle, that they are under no obligation to confine themselves to strict veracity when speaking of Methodism and its Founder. But whatever blame may be justly imputable to Mr. Wesley and his Preachers, the men who violate truth, with ample means of correct information within their reach, should be the last to assume the office of censors. A convicted transgressor of the ninth commandment is ill prepared to undergo a strict cross-examination in preferring the charge of “schism” against his neighbour. Moral precepts are at least as binding as those which relate to church order.

But no man in modern times has written against Mr. Wesley’s ordinations with such flippancy and uncharitableness as the Rev. Edwin Sidney, the biographer of Mr. Walker, of Truro. The following is a specimen of his style and manner :—“ His strange expedient of calling in Erasmus, the Greek Bishop, to ordain his Preachers, brought upon him, and not without reason, the censures of his opponents, particularly of Toplady, who proclaimed the Bishop ‘a vagrant’ and ‘an impostor.’ Indeed it was doubtful whether he was what he pretended to be. But to what inconsistencies may not any man be driven, by once giving way to the miserable excuse of *expediency*? His last act of all, however, was the most extraordinary. When he wanted ordained Preachers for America, he, of a sudden, in his old age, found out, by reading Lord King’s account of the primitive Church, that Bishops and Presbyters are of the same order. This new and convenient discovery determined him to ordain Dr. Coke,

* Letter to the Bishop of Oxford, p. 151.

who hesitated at first, but was overruled by the arguments that had weighed with his friend. He, having consented, was invested with authority by Wesley, who actually gave him *letters of ordination*, to go out and ordain in America, stating in them, ‘I, John Wesley, *think* myself to be providentially called at this time, to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America.’ *Therefore* he sent out Dr. Coke, ‘a Presbyter of the Church of England,’ to preside over the flock of Christ! The plain answer to this presumptuous act seems never to have occurred to either Wesley or Coke,—That if, as they agreed, *Presbyter* and *Bishop* was the same order, the consecration was a useless ceremony; for the latter, having been regularly ordained, was previously thereto as good a Bishop as the former!” *

A short analysis of this quotation will show its character. An equal number of misrepresentations in so small a compass it would be difficult to produce. It is no breach of charity to say, that truth is not the object of men who write in this manner.

Erasmus, the Greek Bishop here mentioned, came to England in the year 1763. It is not true that Mr. Wesley “called in” this stranger “to ordain his Preachers.” One of them only was ordained by him with Mr. Wesley’s consent. The reason was, the pressing necessity for help in the administration of the Lord’s supper in London, now that Thomas Maxfield had withdrawn. Other Preachers, of their own accord, obtained ordination from this foreigner, which so displeased Mr. Wesley, that he expelled every one of them. John Jones, the man who was ordained, was every way worthy of the distinction which he sought. His health afterwards declined, so that he retired from the labours of the itinerancy, and became the Head-Master of the Free School at Harwich, and Curate to Dr. Gibson, the Vicar of that town. He also succeeded the Doctor in the vicarage. In sobriety and moral worth few persons have excelled him. He was the author of an excellent Latin Grammar, and was a graduate in medicine as well as in arts.

But Mr. Toplady, we are told, “proclaimed the Bishop ‘a vagrant’ and ‘an impostor.’” And what of that? Had

* Life of Walker, p. 260. Second edition.

Mr. Sidney been contemporary with this rude polemic, and questioned any of his favourite opinions, Mr. Toplady would, without a moment's hesitation, have called him far worse names. The use of such language proves nothing, except the absence of meekness and courtesy in those who are accustomed to it. Before Dr. Jones accepted ordination, he ascertained that Erasmus had "abundant unexceptionable credentials as to his episcopal character." * He wrote to the Patriarch of Smyrna, who attested the fact under his own hand. The Bishop was also identified by several gentlemen who had seen him in Turkey. †

In assigning reasons for the steps which he had taken for the purpose of giving his societies in America the sacraments and a regular ministry, Mr. Wesley says, in a document which he published at the time, "Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me, *many years ago*, that Bishops and Presbyters are the same order, and consequently have the same right to ordain." He then intimates that his views on this subject had been *long known*; so that he adds, "*For many years* I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right, by ordaining part of our travelling Preachers." ‡ This statement Mr. Walker's biographer positively contradicts. He avers, that "the discovery" respecting the equality of Bishops and Presbyters, by Mr. Wesley, was "sudden," and made in his "old age;" that it was "new," as well as "convenient;" being made just "when he wanted ordained Preachers for America." This is a direct attack upon the veracity of Mr. Wesley, who could not be mistaken on such a subject. If the "discovery" was "sudden," made in his "old age," and made to suit his "convenience," he stands convicted of deliberate falsehood, and the whole affair of his ordinations savours of fraud and dissimulation. In this unscrupulous manner does an evangelical Clergyman write concerning one of the most eminent Ministers of modern times!

What then is the evidence in the case? Did Mr. Wesley utter an untruth? Was he a downright dissembler? or is Mr. Sidney, in this instance, a rash and faithless historian?

* Wesley's Works, vol. x., p. 450.

† Myles's History of the Methodists, p. 88.

‡ Wesley's Works, vol. xiii., p. 218.

On referring to Mr. Wesley's printed Journal, under the date of Jan. 20th, 1746, we read, "I set out for Bristol. On the road I read over Lord King's account of the primitive Church. In spite of the vehement prejudice of my education, I was ready to believe that this was a fair and impartial draught: but if so, it would follow that Bishops and Presbyters are essentially of one order." Here we find "the discovery" which Mr. Sidney says was made in "his old age," actually published when the author was comparatively young, and nearly forty years before he "wanted ordained Preachers for America."

The same principle Mr. Wesley openly avowed in his "Explanatory Notes on the New Testament," which he first published in the year 1755, and at various periods afterwards, to the end of his life. On the clause, "Sending to Ephesus, he called the Elders of the church," (Acts xx. 17,) he says, "These are called Bishops in the 28th verse; rendered Overseers in our translation. Perhaps Elders and Bishops were then the same; or no otherwise different than are the Rector of a parish, and his Curate." His note on Phil. i. 1 is as follows:—" 'With the Bishops and Deacons,'—The former properly took care of the internal state, the latter, of the externals, of the church, I Tim. iii. 2, 8: although these were not wholly confined to the one, nor those to the other. The word Bishops here includes all the Presbyters at Philippi, as well as the ruling Presbyter: the names Bishop and Presbyter, or Elder, being promiscuously used in the first ages." Here we find the same "discovery," not only "made," but publicly avowed, long before Mr. Wesley's "old age."

In the year 1780, four years before he "wanted ordained Preachers for America," Mr. Wesley says, in a letter to his brother, "Read Bishop Stillingfleet's *Irenicum*," or any impartial history of the ancient church; and I believe you will think as I do. I verily believe, I have as good a right to ordain, as to administer the Lord's supper."

The reader may now judge between Mr. Wesley and his accuser, who prefers against him so fearful a charge. On the part of Mr. Sidney we have bold assertion, uttered with an air of contempt,—and nothing else. On the side of Mr. Wesley we have direct documentary evidence, of the strongest kind. In reply to this unprovoked attack upon his moral

character, the venerable accused shall answer for himself, in the memorable words which he uttered upon a somewhat similar occasion, not long before he ended his life of glory and shame. “I am not a man of duplicity. I am not an old hypocrite, a double-tongued knave. I now tell a plain tale, that the good which is in me may not be spoken evil of. I have no temporal end to serve. I seek not the honour that cometh of men. It is not for pleasure that, at this time of life, I travel three or four thousand miles a year. It is not for gain.

No foot of land do I possess,
 No cottage in the wilderness ;
 A poor wayfaring man,
 I lodge a while in tents below,
 Or gladly wander to and fro,
 Till I my Canaan gain.”

That “Canaan” he has long since gained ; and it is gratifying to recollect, that, whatever were his faults, he never falsified the facts of history, for the purpose of defaming the dead.

What Mr. Sidney means when he accuses Mr. Wesley of “giving way to the miserable excuse of expediency,” it is difficult to say. Does he insinuate, that in his public conduct Mr. Wesley was not actuated by a sense of duty, but submitted to incessant labour and hardship, as an expedient for the attainment of some base and selfish end ? What then, we ask, was that end ? and how were the means which he adopted conducive to it ? Did he play the hypocrite when he sacrificed his reputation as a scholar and a gentleman ? when he exposed his life to the rage of mobs, and his person to the extremes of heat and cold, by teaching the outcasts of men the way of salvation in the open air ? Was the employment of unordained Preachers a matter of “wretched expediency ?” Is then the jest of the comedian to be adopted as a sober truth, that it is far better for the sick to die than be cured by men whom the medical profession have not authorized ? Is lay-preaching a greater evil than unrestrained wickedness in this life, and the fire of hell in the world to come ?

Mr. Sidney blames Mr. Wesley for all the extravagance of Ranters and others ; just as if lay-preaching took its origin from him ; and that nothing can be in itself good and just-

fiable that is capable of abuse. Upon the same principle he must condemn the Reformation from Popery, on account of the licentiousness of speculation by which it has been dishonoured; and even Christianity itself, because of the Antinomian purposes to which it has sometimes been applied.

Or does the charge of “wretched expediency” refer to Mr. Wesley’s ordinations? If so, we will remind Mr. Sidney of a few facts, with which he can hardly be unacquainted, but over which he has chosen to throw a veil. Mr. Wesley and Mr. Walker were both intent upon promoting a revival of spiritual religion in the Church of England. This was their avowed object. Yet they adopted different methods in order to the attainment of it. Mr. Wesley was irregular. Mr. Walker adhered to the prescribed order of the Church. They carried on a correspondence on the subject; and Mr. Sidney awards the prize of wisdom and just argument to Mr. Walker, whom he describes as vastly superior to Mr. Wesley in these honourable qualifications. Mr. Wesley, with all his irregularity, laboured to the end of his life to preserve his people in union with the established Church; yet he could not succeed, his object being in most cases defeated by the Clergy. He therefore did consent, that some of his societies should have the Lord’s supper administered to them by their own Preachers. With a reference to this he performed his ordinations. Many years after his death, his people generally fell into this plan, and are now a distinct community. Yet their public conduct has demonstrated to the whole nation that they are not hostile to the Church, as such. They have refused to join in the cry for its subversion; they quietly contribute to its support; and they would be still more friendly, if they were not so often treated as “heathen men and publicans.”

The piety of Mr. Walker was unimpeachable, and so was the sincerity of his attachment to the Church: yet, with all his regularity, his ministry resulted in a direct and formal separation from her pale. After his death the more devout part of his congregation attended the church, as usual; but they felt that the “apostolical succession” was interrupted there. They “knew the voice of the good Shepherd;” but “a stranger would they not follow;” they therefore formed themselves into an Independent church, which continues to

this day, perhaps the most powerful Dissenting body of the kind in the entire county of Cornwall.

Hence it appears that unwillingness to receive the Lord's supper at the hands of immoral Clergymen was not peculiar to the Methodists. It characterized Mr. Walker's people, and those of Mr. Venn; for they also became a congregation of Independents when he resigned his charge at Huddersfield. Mr. Wesley could himself receive the memorials of his Saviour's death from an ungodly man; but he confessed that he could not answer the objections which some of his spiritual children urged against the practice. His respect for the conscientious scruples of good men, which he could not remove, and which were justified by arguments that he could not answer, was a higher principle than "wretched expediency." However such writers as Mr. Sidney may choose to speak, if Christians are solemnly "commanded, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw themselves from every brother that walketh disorderly;" (2 Thess. iii. 6;) and "if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner," it is their duty "not to keep company with such an one," nor so much as "to eat with him;" (1 Cor. v. 11;) it will be difficult to prove that they ought publicly so to recognise "such an one" for a Minister of the Lord Jesus, as at his hands to "eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup." Mr. Wesley laboured through a long life to secure this; and when he could not succeed, he met the case in a manner which he believed to be justifiable on Scripture principles, and by the practice of the primitive church. Mr. Walker's ministry in Truro led to the establishment of strict and systematic Dissent, and such Dissent as has been connected with riotous proceedings in opposition to church-rates. Why was Mr. Sidney silent concerning this fact, when he was extolling Mr. Walker, and depreciating the founder of Methodism?

The official and solemn appointment of Dr. Coke as a Superintendent in the Methodist Church of America, may appear to Mr. Sidney a "presumptuous act," and "a useless ceremony;" and yet the proof of these assumptions is perhaps less easy than he apprehends them to be. Granting that the Doctor "having been regularly ordained" a Pres-

byter, before what is called "his consecration" took place, "was as good a Bishop" as Mr. Wesley himself; he could only exercise the episcopal office among those who were willing to receive him under that character. He could ordain no Ministers but such as would accept his ordination; he could superintend no societies, but such as would submit to his rule. Intelligence was communicated to him, that he would not be received in America, except under Mr. Wesley's express appointment. It was therefore his own special request that he might receive such appointment by imposition of hands and prayer; and that a written declaration to that effect should be given to him. A copy of his letter to Mr. Wesley, containing this request, and assigning this reason, has been preserved. It states that Mr. Fletcher's advice was, that letters testimonial of the different offices to which Mr. Wesley should appoint the Doctor and his companions should be received by them respectively.

With the Doctor's request Mr. Wesley complied; and when he said, "I *think* myself to be providentially called at this time to set apart some persons for the work of the ministry in America," he did not speak doubtingly. In his Journal, he expresses himself thus: "Being *clear in my own mind*, I took a step which I had long weighed, and appointed Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey to go and serve the desolate sheep in America." In the circular letter which he sent to America, he speaks with similar confidence: "*Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end*; and I conceive myself *at full liberty*, as I violate no order, and invade no man's right, by appointing and sending labourers into the harvest."

When Mr. Sidney says that "the plain answer" which he gives to Mr. Wesley's "act," in "setting apart" Dr. Coke for the work assigned him in America, "seems never to have occurred to either Wesley or Coke," and thus claims the merit of readily perceiving what they could not discover, he is very much mistaken; as he would at once have ascertained had he examined the history of the transaction which he is so forward to condemn. Mr. Wesley stated to the Doctor, "that as he had invariably endeavoured, in every step he had taken, to keep as closely to the Bible as possible; so, on the present occasion, he hoped he was not about to deviate from it: that, keeping his eye upon the conduct of the primitive

churches in the ages of unadulterated Christianity, he had much admired the mode of ordaining Bishops, which the church of Alexandria had practised : that to preserve its purity, that church would never suffer the interference of a foreign Bishop, in any of their ordinations ; but the Presbyters of that venerable apostolic church, on the death of a Bishop, exercised the right of ordaining another from their own body, by laying on of their own hands ; and that this practice continued among them for two hundred years, till the days of Dionysius.” *

The ordination of Mr. Whatcoat and Mr. Vasey can only be pronounced “ presumptuous ” on principles which invalidate half the ordinations in Protestant Christendom ; principles which place Protestant Scotland, Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and France, out of the pale of Christianity : and the ordination of Dr. Coke we think fully justifiable from Scripture precedent. Let the following passage of holy writ be duly considered : “ Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain Prophets and teachers ; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the Tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.” (Acts xiii. 1-3.)

At the time of this solemn transaction, St. Paul had been about ten years in the apostolic office ; and Barnabas had long been an efficient teacher of Christianity, and a “ man of note among the disciples.” St. Paul was not an Apostle “ of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.” He was not appointed to the apostolic office, nor did he receive his apostolic qualifications, from any man, or any number of men ; and therefore was not now ordained to the work of the ministry, nor raised to any new order in the church. The theory of Dr. Hammond, that St. Paul was ordained at Antioch the Bishop of a diocese, and that of Archbishop Wake, that he was there ordained to the apostolic office, are

* Drew’s Life of Dr. Coke, pp. 63, 64.

both directly opposed to his own express declaration, Gal. i. 1. With Barnabas he was solemnly "separated," by fasting, prayer, and the imposition of hands, to the task of evangelizing an extensive tract of country. This was done by the express direction of the Holy Ghost, under whose anointing these messengers of truth went forth to a service which was unquestionably included in their original commission. Here then we have an example, not only of men laying their hands upon the head of an equal, as in the case of Barnabas; but of men laying their hands upon the head of one who in gifts and office was far superior to them all. St. Paul was "not a whit behind the very chief of the Apostles;" yet on his re-entrance upon his itinerant ministry, after remaining at Antioch twelve months, the hands of men who could never aspire to the apostolate were laid upon his honoured head. Nor was this a mere ceremony, or a blessing pronounced upon Paul and Barnabas. It was a direct and official "separation" of them to a particular service, which they are afterwards said to have "fulfilled." (Acts xiv. 26.) The objection which Mr. Sidney has urged against the imposition of Mr. Wesley's hands on the head of Dr. Coke, because the Doctor was already of the same order with himself, applies with greater force against the imposition of the hands of Simeon, Lucius, and Manaen, on the head of St. Paul. Yet this act was commanded and sanctioned by the Holy Ghost. The other, therefore, cannot, on the ground alleged by Mr. Sidney, be either "presumptuous" or "useless." It did not raise Dr. Coke to an order essentially different from that which he already occupied; nor was it intended thus to raise him; but it was a solemn and becoming recognition of his appointment to a work of pre-eminent importance and responsibility. The assumption of the name of Bishop was the Doctor's own act, and was opposed to Mr. Wesley's design. The humble title of Superintendent was that which he assigned both to the Doctor and Mr. Asbury. And yet the appointment of a Bishop by Presbyters is no novelty, as the early history of the church of Alexandria demonstrates, as well as that of the Lutheran Church in Germany. In the appointment of Dr. Coke, Mr. Wesley did no more than the great German Reformer had done to meet the wants of the people whom God had given him. Every reader of ecclesiastical history knows that

Martin Luther, again and again, with the aid and concurrence of his fellow-Presbyters, ordained Bishops for the Protestant Church of Germany.

To answer all Mr. Sidney's aspersions upon Mr. Wesley, and all his misrepresentations of Mr. Wesley's principles and acts, would be an endless task. The fact is, he seems to have gathered all his knowledge concerning this venerable man from the pamphlets of the Messrs. Hill and Toplady, written under the excitement of unsanctified controversy, without listening for a moment to Mr. Wesley's own statements and reasonings. The Jewish law condemned no man before he was heard, and it was known what he had done; neither was it "the manner of the Romans" to pass sentence upon any one till he had been confronted with his accuser; but Mr. Sidney is bound by no such formalities. If justice between man and man be a matter of mere opinion, his allegation, that Mr. Wesley was destitute of even heathen honesty might well provoke a smile; but if "God spake these words, and said, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," the subject assumes a very different character. Many of this great man's revilers have already gone with him to give an account to the "one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." Mr. Sidney must also meet him before the judgment-seat of Christ. If it should then appear, that John Wesley really was a man of God, and an instrument of good to the world, it will afford no pleasure to Mr. Sidney that he has so often spoken of him without any regard for either candour, charity, or truth.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ONE of the most affecting incidents connected with advancing life is the loss of early friends, who successively retire to "the house appointed for all living." They are seen no more in the domestic and social circle, and in the sanctuary of God. Their advice is no longer available in cases of difficulty, and their sympathy in affliction. The post ceases to bring their desired and welcome epistles; and when they are remembered in the closet, where for years they were daily commended to the divine mercy, the solemnly-affecting thought recurs, that they cannot now be benefited by our prayers. "I shall go to him; but he will not return to me."

Mr. Charles Wesley survived most of his early religious companions. Before he left the world, many even of his spiritual children died in the Lord. Of the death of Hervey, Grimshaw, and Whitefield, mention has already been made; and others followed; so that he was at length left in the midst of a new generation. Many of these he loved and esteemed; but his tenderest friendships were dissolved; and they had indeed been deep and sincere.

The Rev. Henry Piers, the pious Vicar of Bexley, appears to have died in the year 1769. He was, as we have seen, Mr. Charles Wesley's son in the Gospel, and a cordial friend to him and his brother. It is probable that he was an Irishman; for he was educated at Trinity College, Dublin. Before he obtained the vicarage of Bexley, he held the curacy of Winwick, in Lancashire. He was a member of the first Conference, and shared in the glorious dishonour of early Methodism; though there is no evidence that he ever violated canonical order. His spirit was timid and gentle; yet he bore a noble testimony to the truth before the Clergy at their visitation; and when Mr. Wesley went to Oxford, to preach for the last time before the University, Mr. Piers accompanied him thither, and publicly walked from the church of St. Mary's, with him, his brother Charles, and Mr. Meriton, (four meek and fearless confessors!) when "of the rest durst

no man join himself to them.” Lady Huntingdon’s biographer states, that soon after the first Methodist Conference, Mr. Piers was presented to a living in Ireland ;* but this we believe to be a mistake. According to the parish register of Bexley, he ended his life and labours in that village, the vicarage of which he held for thirty-three years. The register of christenings bears his signature to the close of the year 1767 ; and in the beginning of the year 1770 his successor entered upon his office. Mr. Piers published three sermons, and a biographical account of the men who compiled the book of Common Prayer. From these productions of his pen it would appear that he was a great admirer of the formularies of the English Church, the devout and evangelical spirit of which he had thoroughly imbibed.

Ebenezer Blackwell, the faithful and undeviating friend of the Wesleys, closed his upright life, April 21st, 1782, at his house in Lewisham. Mr. Charles Wesley was doubtless present on the occasion ; for among his manuscripts are two hymns, which bear the same date, one, a “ Prayer for Mr. Blackwell, departing ;” and the other, “ On the Death of Mr. Ebenezer Blackwell.” These compositions are equally pious and affectionate. The subjoined stanzas are a specimen :—

Affliction’s kind, unfailing friend,
 He wisely used his growing store,
 And prized his privilege to lend
 To God, by giving to the poor :
 The Lord his liberal servant bless’d,
 Who paid him back the blessings given,
 And still the more his wealth increased,
 More treasure he laid up in heaven.

Through life inviolably just,
 He his integrity maintain’d,
 Most strictly faithful to his trust,
 An upright man of truth unfeign’d :
 His roughly-honest soul abhorr’d
 The polish smooth, the courtier’s art,
 While, free from guile in every word,
 He spoke the language of his heart.

* Vol. ii., p. 155.

Happy the souls he leaves behind,
 If following him as he his Lord,
 As meek, as lowly, and resign'd,
 They hear the last transporting word ;
 If ready through their Saviour's love,
 When all the storms of life are o'er,
 As safe and sudden they remove,
 And grasp their friend to part no more !

To ask his death shall I presume ?
 Saviour, in me thyself reveal ;
 And grant me, when my hour is come,
 His penitence and faith to feel :
 Thou seest the wish of this weak heart,
 His cup of torture to decline ;
 And let me then like him depart,
 And let his final state be mine !

On the 24th of August following Mr. John Wesley made the following touching entry in his Journal :—" My brother and I paid our last visit to Lewisham, and spent a few pensive hours with the relict of our good friend Mr. Blackwell. We took one more walk round the garden and meadow, which he took so much pains to improve. Upwards of forty years this has been my place of retirement, when I could spare two or three days from London. In that time, first Mrs. Sparrow went to rest ; then Mrs. Dewal ; then good Mrs. Blackwell ; and now Mr. Blackwell himself. Who can tell how soon we may follow them ? "

The holy life of the venerable Perronet now began to draw towards a close. After the death of his afflicted wife, his daughter Damaris sustained the care of his family, and was his tender friend and companion. She was a most faithful and upright woman, truly devoted to God, and zealous of good works. Her life was spent in acts of benevolence, and in persevering efforts to advance the cause of true religion ; yet her health was delicate, and such as subjected her to considerable mental depression. On the 9th of September, 1782, this excellent lady suddenly expired in a fit of apoplexy. No trial could perhaps have been more severe to her aged father ; yet his resignation surprised all who witnessed it. When he found, after every means had been tried for her recovery, that her sanctified spirit had actually taken its flight, he rose up, and with deep and solemn emotion

exclaimed, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" This was a scene never to be forgotten by those who were present. On the Sunday after her funeral, he preached from Mark xiii. 33: "Take ye heed: watch and pray, for ye know not when the time is."

Mr. Charles Wesley, whose heart was ever charged with generous sympathy, addressed a letter of condolence to the bereaved Vicar of Shoreham; who thus acknowledged his kindness:—

"Oct. 23d, 1782. My very dear Brother,—As I cannot personally thank you, for your late Christian condolence, I take the first opportunity of doing it by letter. My loss indeed is very great; but her gain, I am certain, is much greater. Nor has the Lord left me destitute; for He has graciously raised up to my help my dear granddaughter, Elizabeth Briggs; one of much grace, prudence, and discretion. All glory be to his holy name!

"My heavenly Father entered me very early into the school of Christ; and has more or less continued me in it (adored be his goodness!) for full fourscore years. I was not more than eight years old when I began to taste of grief and sorrow; but I know that every bitter cup proceeded from divine love; and therefore what abundant reason have I to be thankful! May God preserve you and yours, and me and mine, through all the paths of suffering grace here, to his eternal kingdom of glory hereafter! Love to all.

"Thine affectionately."

A few weeks afterwards he addressed another letter to his friend Mr. Charles Wesley; in which he says, "It is a most certain truth, that God is not limited to times, places, or persons. On the contrary, how often has He mercifully disappointed our most anxious fears! So that we must leave all events to his divine wisdom; see his hand in everything; and ever bow down before Him with the deepest reverence.

"Behold, my dear brother, the astonishing signs of the times! Babylon is destroying herself with her own hands. That infernal court, the Inquisition, that perfect emblem of hell upon earth, is tottering to the ground. The infallible Pope himself, with Catholic Kings and Princes, seem all to

join in the confederacy. But what wonder? It is only a preparation for the grand kingdom of Christ upon earth. Lord, hasten the time!

“Fear not for your dear son Charles. I trust he will pass through the court untainted, like Daniel and his three companions.

“If I live till the 23d of December, I enter into my ninetyeth year; and if the prayers of such an old Divine can be of any service, he and his worthy family may depend upon them.

“The divine blessing be with all of us, and all belonging to us! My love to all, and in particular to the dear companion of your life. We shall one day meet.”

Such was the spirit of this “very aged man.” He spent most of his time in his study, in reading and devotion, abstracted from the world, and thinking mostly of heaven. His communion with God was sanctifying and joyous, and his intercourse with his family cheering and benevolent. To the future prosperity of the church, as described in the prophetic scriptures, his attention was much directed; and with even rapturous emotions he anticipated the final overthrow of idolatry, and every form of anti-Christian error, and the universal extension of evangelical truth, holiness, and peace. His bodily infirmities increased; his deafness rendered him almost incapable of conversation; but his intellect retained its vigour; and, as in the case of St. John, divine love seemed to be the very element of his being.

Thus he was found when the heavenly summons came. The winter of the year 1784–5 was perhaps one of the severest ever known in England. The first fall of snow happened Oct. 7th, and the last April 3d. The extreme cold lasted five months and twenty-four days. During all that time, with the exception of about twelve days in January, the frost continued, and the earth was covered with snow. Every precaution was taken to preserve Mr. Perronet from cold; but the weather affected him, so that he began visibly to decline. On Saturday, May 7th, 1785, he was remarkably cheerful. In the afternoon he desired his granddaughter to leave him alone. When she returned, she observed a peculiar sweetness and animation in his countenance. As she entered the room he smiled upon her, and tears of joy

ran down his face. He had been reading the last three chapters of the Book of Isaiah, which he recommended to her perusal; and said he had such a view from them of the great things which the Lord was about to do upon the earth as had filled him with joy and wonder.

During the next day he was in the same heavenly disposition, and conversed with several of the people who came to attend the public worship of God. His pain appeared to be gone, and his spirits were lively. His granddaughter attended him, as usual, after he was in bed; and when she took leave of him for the night, he said to her, "The Lord bless you, my dear, and all that belong to you! Yea, He will; I know He will!" Many times he repeated these words with great emphasis; and after she had left the room, she distinctly heard him utter them. The next morning, when she entered his chamber, the spirit was fled! On the following Saturday his remains were interred in the same grave with his wife and daughter, attended by a large concourse of people. Mr. Charles Wesley read the funeral service, and preached the next day on the appropriate text, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

It has been already observed that Mr. Perronet was the confidential adviser of the two Wesleys through the greater part of their public life: so that Charles used to call him "the Archbishop of the Methodists." In his own practice, as a Clergyman, he appears to have been quite regular; but two of his sons were Travelling Preachers. Both of them, it will be recollected, were anxious to introduce the sacraments into the Methodist chapels; and with this the current phraseology of their father was in full accordance. Even in his letters to Mr. Charles Wesley he speaks of "the Methodist Church." In one of those letters he says, "Honest brother Mitchell is my assistant, once a fortnight, at the water-house, where he preaches to a very quiet audience. I make no doubt Methodism, notwithstanding all the wiles of Satan, is designed by divine Providence to introduce the approaching millennium." When the Preachers visited Shoreham, Mr. Perronet's house was their home; and in a room which he fitted up under his own roof, they regularly ministered the word of life. In his spirit and manners he was a perfect gentleman, and a Christian; and a more spot-

less and upright character has seldom adorned any section of the universal church. He wrote several able and edifying tracts in defence of those views of divine truth which the Wesleys so successfully taught. These valuable productions of his pen well deserve to be republished.

Mr. Charles Wesley's respect for the Perronet family did not end with the funeral of its revered head. It extended to the posterity of that blessed man, especially to Miss Elizabeth Briggs, for whom her grandfather had cherished so sincere a respect. She remained for some time at Shoreham, where she was very useful and highly esteemed in the village. Mr. Charles Wesley encouraged her in her labours of love. The following letter he addressed to her twelve months after the death of the holy man whom she had served:—

“April 28th, 1786. My dear Betsy,—You are once more in your proper place, and experience that word: ‘He that watereth others shall be watered also himself.’ I expect Shoreham will be like Epworth. After my father's departure, the whole town was taken. If the Lord give me strength, I hope to see you and your flock in the summer.

“‘*Sad anniversary of his translation,*’ do you call it? and your ‘loss irreparable?’ The day was the most joyful and happy he ever knew; and your loss is momentary, and repairable in a happy eternity. We ought only to rejoice and give thanks for his having been lent to the world near a century. Therefore from this time, observe, I can allow you to mourn no more.

“I am always glad to hear of your affairs. You need take no thought for the morrow, but say, ‘In all my ways I acknowledge thee; and thou shalt direct my paths.’ My wife and daughter join in true love for you, with, my dear Betsy,

“Your faithful friend and servant.”

At a subsequent period, and in the prospect for her removal from Shoreham, he wrote to her as follows:—

“For the short time I have to stay here, I shall be happy to assist, in any degree, a child of my blessed father, and yours, now waiting for us in paradise. You will not be discharged so easily. There is more work for you to do, and more affliction for you to suffer, before you are permitted to depart in peace. I shall strive hard to see you before you

leave Shoreham. We depend upon your coming straight to us, after you have paid your duty to your mother. I stay in town on purpose to receive you. My wife and Sally long to see you. My love to the whole society. Remember in your faithful prayers, dear Betsy,

“Your loving servant and friend.”

On the removal of this pious and intelligent young lady from Shoreham, she took up her residence in Hoxton-square, where Mr. Charles Wesley addressed to her the following kind letter, on her arrival:—

“Dear Betsy,—I am a prisoner here by an inflammation in my eyes; or I should have met you more than half way: probably the last time we should meet on earth. Send me a line of information concerning your dear mother’s health, and all your family. The enclosed account of them came from Ned Perronet. You have the best right to it. How many of them in glory are expecting us! We shall have time enough for conversing with them when time is no more. My family affectionately salute you, particularly my secretary Sally. The Lord will give you, if it be best, a far more useful, if not more loving, friend than

“Your faithful and affectionate C. W.”

In the spring of 1788 Miss Briggs was married to the Rev. Peard Dickenson, who had been the Curate of her grandfather at Shoreham. He had so approved himself by his piety, diligence, and zeal, that many of the parishioners united in a petition to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster, with whom the right of presentation was vested, that he might be appointed Mr. Perronet’s successor in the vicarage. But one of the Prebends claimed it for his eldest son, and the request was denied. After this Mr. Dickenson connected himself more closely with Mr. Wesley, and to the end of his life officiated as a Clergyman in the Methodist chapels of London. He was a sound scholar, a spiritual and exemplary Minister of the Lord Jesus; and with Mr. Creighton assisted Mr. Wesley in some of his latest ordinations.

Within little more than three months after the death of Mr. Perronet, Mr. John and Charles Wesley lost another of their ablest and most faithful friends, the devoted Vicar of Madeley, who died after an illness of a few days, caught in the discharge of his clerical duties. Few men have ever excelled

him in piety, and perhaps none were ever more honoured in their latter end. The particulars of his triumphant death, drawn up with inimitable simplicity and force by his estimable widow, are too well known to need repetition here. Being indulged with the richest manifestations of God's mercy in Christ, he called upon all around him to unite in the loudest ascriptions of praise. Such was the fulness of his spiritual joy, that he expressed a desire for a gust of praise that should go to the ends of the earth. Having the most elevated and impressive views of the atonement of Christ, he often exclaimed,

“Jesu's blood, through earth and skies,
Mercy, free, boundless mercy, cries !”

and added, in the full exercise of an appropriating faith,

“Mercy's full power I soon shall prove,
Loved with an everlasting love !”

In this manner the holy Fletcher, the eloquent and successful advocate of the Wesleyan theology, closed his eyes upon every earthly object, and passed to the enjoyment of his endless reward, August 14th, 1785.

The account of his sickness, death, and funeral, Mrs. Fletcher transmitted to Mr. Charles Wesley, accompanied by the following note:—“Madeley, August 24th, 1785. Dear Sir,—Enclosed you have an account of my feelings when I thought myself dying, as did most about me. I prayed for strength to do justice to my dearest, dearest love. I wrote it in one day, but could not go over it a second time. Take it, then, as it flowed from my full heart, without a second thought, and pray for your deeply distressed friend.

“I cannot find your brother. I wrote to him at first, but have got no answer. I stay here, if I live, half a year, to get the people regularly settled in society. My cup is bitter indeed ; but I shall be soon with him, and together we shall behold His glory.”

The time now began rapidly to approach when Mr. Charles Wesley perceived that he also must die. His removal into the world of spirits was not an event that came upon him unawares. To prepare for it had been the leading business of the greater part of his life. He expected it therefore, not

with alarm, but with hope and desire. His treasure and his heart were already in heaven; and the abiding consciousness which he had of his title to the future inheritance, resulting from his filial relation to God, and of his meetness for it, through the sanctifying power of the Holy Ghost, filled him with adoring thankfulness. Deeply was he sensible that he possessed no proper merit in the sight of God; and he knew that he needed none, according to the tenor of the evangelical covenant. Hence his self-abasement was profound; his reliance upon the sacrifice and intercession of Christ, entire; and his hope of glory was that of a sinner, who knew that he was both justified and sanctified by grace, and looked for eternal life as a gift to be gratuitously bestowed upon a believing penitent.

He waited for the coming of the Lord in patient labour, as well as in sanctifying hope. The lease of the Foundery in London expired about the year 1777, when the commodious chapel in the City-road was built, and the congregation removed thither. In this new and more elegant erection, or in some other of the metropolitan chapels, Mr. Charles Wesley generally preached in the morning and afternoon of every Sabbath, except when he was supplying the congregations in Bristol, or was disabled by affliction. A few persons are still living, who attended these his latest ministrations. According to their testimony, he was singularly tender and affectionate in his manner, when addressing those that were "afflicted in mind, body, or estate," and especially those who mourned under a penitent conviction of sin. In beating down the pride of self-righteousness, the presumption of Antinomianism, and the obtrusive forwardness of superficial and doubtful piety, he was awfully solemn and awakening; for he spoke "like one having authority."

If his thoughts did not flow freely in the pulpit, he was very deliberate, making long pauses, as if waiting for the promised communication of divine influence. In such cases he usually preached with his eyes closed; he fumbled with his hands about his breast; leaned with his elbows upon the Bible; and his whole body was in motion. He was often so feeble as to be under a necessity of once or twice calling upon the congregation to sing, in the course of his sermon, that he might partially recover himself, and be able to finish his

discourse. When he had strength, and his mind was under peculiar excitement, as it often was, he expressed himself with fluency and power. His sentences were short and pointed, charged with the most weighty truths; and the language was such as all understood and felt. His sermons were the effusions of a heart overflowing with divine truth and love. They were rich in scripture sentiment, and in scripture phraseology, "as it were a paved work of sapphire." In prayer he was copious and mighty, especially upon sacramental occasions, when he seemed to "enter into the holiest of all by the blood of Jesus." Greatly was he enfeebled by age and disease; yet he continued his public religious services, in this spirit and manner, till within a few months of his death.

For condemned felons his compassionate concern continued undiminished to the last. His tender heart yearned over this class of transgressors. He visited them in their cells; wept with them because of their guilt and misery; taught them the way to the mercy-seat of God, through the death of his Son; prayed with them; brought their case before his congregations, and urged his friends to invoke the divine pity upon them. The last publication that he sent from the press was a tract of twelve pages, entitled, "Prayers for Condemned Malefactors." It consists of hymns adapted to their use, breathing the spirit of fear and contrition, and distinctly recognising the evangelical doctrine of free and present salvation from sin, to be obtained by faith in the sacrificial death of Christ. In these labours of love he was signally owned of God. The tract just mentioned, which was printed in the year 1785, had respect to a large number of culprits who suffered at that time. In a manuscript note, appended to one of those hymns, he says, "These prayers were answered Thursday, April 28th, 1785, on nineteen malefactors, who all died penitent. Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me!" Thus, like his Saviour, he affected not the society of the rich and powerful, but condescended to men of low estate. He sought out the most abject of the race, whom he endeavoured instrumentally to save. When he succeeded, his joy rose to rapture.

At this period of his life his appearance and habits were peculiar. "He rode every day (clothed for winter even in summer) a little horse, grey with age. When he mounted, if

a subject struck him, he proceeded to expand and put it in order. He would write a hymn thus given him on a card, (kept for that purpose,) with his pencil, in short-hand. Not unfrequently he has come to the house in the City-road, and, having left the pony in the garden in front, he would enter, crying out, ‘Pen and ink! pen and ink!’ These being supplied, he wrote the hymn he had been composing. When this was done, he would look round on those present, and salute them with much kindness; ask after their health; give out a short hymn, and thus put all in mind of eternity. He was fond of that stanza upon those occasions:—

There all the ship’s company meet,
 Who sail’d with the Saviour beneath;
 With shouting each other they greet,
 And triumph o’er sorrow and death.
 The voyage of life’s at an end,
 The mortal affliction is past;
 The age that in heaven they spend
 For ever and ever shall last.”*

In age the sympathies of his heart were unimpaired. To his friend Mr. William Marriott, who had lost a son by the small-pox, he addressed the following affectionate letter towards the close of the year 1785:—“The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. This, my dear friends, is, I doubt not, the language of your sorrowful hearts: sorrowful, yet resigned to unerring wisdom and goodness. Jesus wept to see his creatures weeping. He does not disapprove your feeling your loss; neither do you offer to God a sacrifice which costs you nought. Your comfort is, that He orders all things well, and makes all things work together for good to them that love Him. My partner sympathizes with yours. We lost our only son by the small-pox. You find several hymns on the occasion in the funeral hymns, which are too suitable. That God may sanctify your affliction, and make it instrumental to your eternal happiness, is the earnest prayer of

“Your faithful friend and servant.”

Yet, while Mr. Charles Wesley continued his labours he made no account of them, and regarded himself as passive clay

* Moore’s Life of Mr. Wesley, vol. ii., p. 369.

in the potter's hands. It would be impossible to express the prevailing state of his mind, at this period, in more striking terms than he has himself employed in a hymn which he wrote on our Lord's address to Peter: "When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not." (John xxi. 18.) In these very remarkable stanzas he has also correctly described the ardour of his zeal in the earlier periods of his ministry, and the impetuosity with which he occasionally assailed those who opposed his peculiar views.

When young, and full of sanguine hope,
 And warm in my first love,
 My spirit's loins I girded up,
 And sought the things above,
 Swift on the wings of active zeal
 With Jesu's message flew,
 O'erjoy'd with all my heart and will
 My Master's work to do.

Freely where'er I would, I went
 Through Wisdom's pleasant ways,
 Happy to spend and to be spent
 In minist'ring his grace:
 I found no want of will or power,
 In love's sweet task employ'd,
 And put forth every day and hour
 My utmost strength for God.

As strong, and glorying in my might,
 I drew the two-edged sword,
 Valiant against a troop to fight
 The battles of the Lord;
 I scorn'd the multitude to dread,
 Rush'd on with full career,
 And aim'd at each opposer's head,
 And smote off many an ear.

But now, enervated by age,
 I feel my fierceness gone,
 And nature's powers no more engage
 To prop the Saviour's throne:
 My total impotence I see,
 For help on Jesus call,
 And stretch my feeble hands to thee,
 Who workest all in all.

Thy captive, Lord, myself I yield,
 As purely passive clay ;
 Thy holy will be all fulfill'd,
 Constraining mine to' obey :
 My passions by thy Spirit bind,
 And, govern'd by thy word,
 I'll suffer all the woes design'd
 To make me like my Lord.

Wholly at thy dispose I am,
 No longer at my own,
 All self-activity disclaim,
 And move in God alone :
 Transport, do what thou wilt with me,
 A few more evil days,
 But bear me safe through all to see
 My dear Redeemer's face.

In the month of February, 1788, Mr. Charles Wesley was reduced to a state of great weakness, but was able still occasionally to go abroad. A memorandum which he wrote at this time is worth preserving, as a striking illustration of the uprightness which marked his conduct through life. The balance of a small account, of some years' standing, was demanded of him by a music-seller, the correctness of which was not very apparent. He immediately transmitted the money, with the following note:—"If there is the least doubt, Mr. Wesley always takes the safest, that is, his neighbour's, side; choosing to pay a bill twice or twenty times, rather than not at all. He will be obliged to Mr. Wright for a line of acknowledgment, that he is now out of his debt."

On the 18th of this month his brother addressed to him the laconic but friendly note:—"Dear Brother,—You must go out every day, or die. Do not die to save charges. You certainly need not want anything as long as I live."

The time was now come for Mr. John Wesley to leave London, and itinerate through the country. He says, "I took a solemn leave of the congregation at West-street, by applying once more what I had enforced fifty years before, 'By grace are ye saved, through faith.' At the following meeting the presence of God, in a marvellous manner, filled the place. The next evening we had a very numerous congregation at the new chapel, to which I declared the whole

counsel of God. I seemed now to have finished my work in London. If I see it again, well ; if not, I pray God to raise up others, that will be more faithful and more successful in his work ! ”

On the following day it is probable the brothers took leave of each other, to meet no more in this world. Charles was so enfeebled, that it was doubtful whether he would ever be able to resume his work. Four days after their separation Mr. John Wesley addressed to him an affectionate letter from Bath, in which he says, “ Many inquire after you, and express much affection, and desire of seeing you. In good time ! You are first suffering the will of God. Afterwards he has a little more for you to do : that is, provided you now take up your cross, (for that it frequently must be,) and go out at least an hour in a day. I would not blame you, if it were two or three. Never mind expense. I can make that up. You shall not die to save charges. I shall shortly have a word to say to Charles, or his brother, or both. Peace be with all your spirits ! ”

On the 5th of March, having arrived in Bristol, Mr. John Wesley again wrote to his brother, saying, “ I hope you keep to your rule, of going out every day, although it may sometimes be a cross. Keep to this but one month, and I am persuaded you will be as well as you was at this time twelve-month.

“ If I ventured to give you one more advice, it would be this, ‘ Be master of your own house.’ If you fly, they pursue. But stand firm, and you will carry your point.”

Mr. Charles Wesley was now too feeble to correspond with his brother. His daughter watched over him with tender solicitude, and appears from time to time to have transmitted to her uncle an account of her revered parent. He sent her the following letter from Bristol, under the date of March 7th :—

“ My dear Sally,—When my appetite was entirely gone, so that all I could take at dinner was a roasted turnip, it was restored in a few days, by riding out daily, after taking ten drops of elixir of vitriol in a glass of water. It is highly probable this would have the same effect in my brother’s case. But in the mean time, I wish he would see Dr. Whitehead. I am persuaded there is not such another

Physician in England : although, to confound human wisdom, he does not know how to cure his own wife.

“ He must lie in bed as little as possible in the day-time : otherwise it will hinder his sleeping at night.

“ Now, Sally, tell your brothers from me, that their tenderly-respectful behaviour to their father (even to asking his pardon, if in anything they have offended him) will be the best cordial for him under heaven. I know not but they may save his life thereby. To know that nothing will be wanting on your part gives great satisfaction to, my dear Sally,

“ Yours very affectionately.”

The suggestion respecting the calling in of Dr. Whitehead appears to have been followed by the family. “ I visited him several times,” says the Doctor, “ in his last sickness ; and his body was indeed reduced to the most extreme state of weakness. He possessed that state of mind which he had been always pleased to see in others : unaffected humility, and holy resignation to the will of God. He had no transports of joy, but solid hope, and unshaken confidence in Christ, which kept his mind in perfect peace.” *

Dr. Whitehead’s statement respecting Mr. Charles Wesley’s holy confidence and tranquillity is beautifully illustrated by the following hymn, which he is said to have “ written a little before his death : ”—

“ Take away all iniquity, and give good.” (Hosea xiv. 2.)

How long, how often, shall I pray,
Take all iniquity away ;
And give the plenitude of good,
The blessing bought by Jesu’s blood ;
Concupiscence and pride remove,
And fill me, Lord, with humble love ?

Again I take the words to me
Prescribed, and offer them to thee :
Thy kingdom come, to root out sin,
And perfect holiness bring in ;
And swallow up my will in thine,
And human change into divine.

* Life of the Rev. Charles Wesley, p. 369.

So shall I render thee thine own,
 And tell the wonders thou hast done,
 The power and faithfulness declare
 Of God, who hears and answers prayer,
 Extol the riches of thy grace,
 And spend my latest breath in praise.

O that the joyful hour was come,
 Which calls thy ready servant home,
 Unites me to the church above,
 Where angels chant the song of love,
 And saints eternally proclaim
 The glories of the heavenly Lamb !

These lines do not, indeed, display the burning energy of many of his earlier compositions ; yet they are not unworthy of the expiring poet. The sentiments which they express had long been familiar to his heart. As a prayer for entire holiness, and for an immediate admission into heaven, they were highly appropriate to the occasion. They were probably the last verses that he ever committed to paper. The hand of the ready writer now forgot its cunning.

Mr. John Wesley, who was still at Bristol, wrote the subjoined letter to his brother, on the 17th of March :—" Dear Brother,—I am just setting out on my northern journey, but must snatch time to write two or three lines. I stand and admire the wise and gracious dispensations of divine Providence ! Never was there before so loud a call to all that are under your roof. If they have not hitherto sufficiently regarded either you, or the God of their fathers, what is more calculated to convince them, than to see you hovering so long upon the borders of the grave ? And I verily believe, if they receive the admonition, God will raise you up again. I know you have the sentence of death in yourself. So had I more than twelve years ago. I know nature is utterly exhausted. But is not nature subject to His word ? I do not depend upon Physicians, but upon Him that raiseth the dead. Only let your whole family stir themselves up, and be instant in prayer : then I have only to say to each, ' If thou canst believe, thou shalt see the glory of God ! '

" Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might."

The intelligence which was conveyed to Mr. John Wesley, respecting his brother, was increasingly unfavourable : hence

the peculiarity of the following letter, which he addressed to his niece, and which indicates that her father was in the last state of exhaustion, unable to receive any nourishment. It was written from Worcester, and dated March 20th :—

“ My dear Sally,—Mr. Whitefield had, for a considerable time, thrown up all the food he took. I advised him to slit a large onion across the grain, and bind it warm on the pit of his stomach. He vomited no more. Pray apply this to my brother’s stomach, the next time he eats.

“ One in Yorkshire, who was dying for want of food, as she threw up all she took, was saved by the following means :—Boil crusts of white bread to the consistence of a jelly :—add a few drops of lemon-juice, and a little loaf-sugar :—take a spoonful once or twice an hour. By all means, let him try this.

“ If neither of these avail, (which I think will not be the case,) remember the lady at Paris, who lived several weeks without swallowing a grain, by applying thin slices of beef to the stomach.

“ But, above all, let prayer be made continually ; and probably he will be stronger after this illness than he has been these ten years. Is anything too hard for God ? On Sunday I am to be at Birmingham ; on Sunday se’nnight, at Madeley, near Shifnal, Salop. My dear Sally, adieu ! ”

Hence it appears that Mr. John Wesley still entertained a hope of his brother’s recovery. The decree, however, was gone forth, and no means could avail for the preservation of his life. While he remained in the state of extreme feebleness to which the letter of John refers, having been silent and quiet for some time, he called Mrs. Wesley to him, and requested her to write the following lines at his dictation :—

In age and feebleness extreme,
Who shall a sinful worm redeem ?
JESUS, my only hope thou art,
Strength of my failing flesh and heart ;
O could I catch a smile from thee,
And drop into eternity !

For fifty years Christ as the Redeemer of men had been the subject of his effective ministry, and of his loftiest songs ; and he may be said to have died with a hymn to Christ upon his lips. He lingered till the 29th of March, 1788, when he

yielded up his spirit into the hands of his God and Saviour, at the advanced age of seventy-nine years and three months.

Information of the solemn event was sent by Mr. Bradburn to Mr. John Wesley ; but as the letter was wrongly directed, it did not reach him till the 4th of April, the day before the funeral took place. He could not therefore attend the remains of his brother to the grave ;* but he immediately sent the following letter to his bereaved sister-in-law :—

“ Macclesfield, April 4th. Dear Sister,—Half an hour ago I received a letter from Mr. Bradburn, informing me of my brother’s death. For eleven or twelve days before I had not one line concerning him. The last I had was from Charles, which I delayed to answer, expecting every day to receive some farther information. We have only now to learn that great lesson, ‘The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away : blessed be the name of the Lord !’ If it had been necessary, in order to serve either him or you, I should not have thought much of coming up to London. Indeed, to serve you, or your dear family, in anything that is in my power, will always be a pleasure to, dear sister,

“ Your affectionate friend and brother.”

On the same day Miss Sarah Wesley drew up the following letter, which she addressed to her uncle :—

“ Dear and honoured Uncle,—We were all present when my dear, respected father departed this life. His end was, what he particularly wished it might be, peace !

“ For some months past he seemed totally detached from earth. He spoke very little, nor wished to hear anything read but the Scriptures.

“ He took a solemn leave of all his friends. I once asked if he had any presages that he should die. He said, ‘No ;’ but his weakness was such, that he thought it impossible he ‘should live through March.’ He kindly bade me remember him, and seemed to have no doubt but I should meet him in heaven.

“ All his prayer was, ‘Patience, and an easy death !’ He

* “ If Mr. Bradburn’s letter of March 29th had been directed to Birmingham, where I then was, I should have taken coach on Sunday, the 30th, and been with you on Monday, the 31st. But all is well. By that mistake, I am much farther on my journey.”—Manuscript letter to the Rev. Peard Dickenson, from Mr. Wesley.

bade every one who visited him to supplicate for these ; often repeating, ‘ An easy death ! ’

“ He told my mother, the week before he departed, that no fiend was permitted to approach him ; and said to us all, ‘ I have *a good hope* ! ’

“ When we asked if he wanted anything, he frequently answered, ‘ Nothing but Christ ! ’

“ Some person observed, that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be passed. ‘ Not with Christ,’ replied he.

“ On March 27th, after a most uneasy night, he prayed, as in an agony, that he might not have many such nights. ‘ O my God,’ said he, ‘ *not many* ! ’

“ It was with great difficulty he seemed to speak. About ten days before, on my brother Samuel’s entering the room, he took hold of his hand, and pronounced, with a voice of faith, ‘ I shall bless God to all eternity, that ever you were born. I am persuaded I shall ! ’

“ My brother Charles also seemed much upon his mind. ‘ That dear boy ! ’ said he, ‘ God bless him ! ’

“ He spoke less to me than to the rest, which has since given me some pain. However, he bade me trust in God, and never forsake Him ; and then he assured me, that He never would forsake me.

“ The 28th my mother asked if he had anything to say to us. Raising his eyes, he said, ‘ Only thanks ! love ! blessing ! ’

“ Tuesday and Wednesday he was not entirely sensible. He slept much, without refreshment, and had the restlessness of death for, I think, the whole week.

“ He was eager to depart ; and if we moved him, or spoke to him, he answered, ‘ Let me die ! let me die ! ’

“ A fortnight before he prayed, with many tears, for all his enemies, naming Miss Freeman. ‘ I beseech thee, O Lord, by thine agony and bloody sweat,’ said he, ‘ that she may never feel the pangs of eternal death ! ’

“ When your kind letter to my brother came, (in which you affectionately tell him, that you will be a father to him and my brother Samuel,) I read it to our father. ‘ He will *be kind to you*,’ said he, ‘ when I am gone. I am certain your uncle *will be kind* to all of you.’

“ The last morning, which was the 29th of March, being

unable to speak, my mother entreated him to press her hand, if he knew her; which he feebly did.

“His last words which I could hear were, ‘Lord—my heart,—my God!’ He then drew his breath short, and the last so gently, that we knew not exactly the moment in which his happy spirit fled.

“His dear hand was in mine for five minutes before, and at the awful period of, his dissolution.

“It had often been his desire that we should attend him to the grave; and though he did not mention it again (which he did the place of his burial) during his illness, we all mean to fulfil his wish; trusting we shall be supported, as we have been hitherto, in our afflicting situations.

“My dear, honoured uncle, my mother presents you her respectful love, and my brothers join with me in duty, begging your prayers for the widow and the fatherless! I am

“Your afflicted and dutiful niece.”

This tender and interesting communication Mr. John Wesley answered from Manchester, on the 12th of April, as follows:—“My dear Sally,—I thank you for the account you have given me. It is full and satisfactory. You describe a very awful scene. The time, I doubt not, was prolonged, on purpose that it might make the deeper impression on those that otherwise might soon have forgotten it. What a difference does one moment make when the soul springs out of time into eternity! What an amazing change! What are all the pleasures, the business of this world, to a disembodied spirit? Let *us* therefore be ready; for the day is at hand! But the comfort is, it cannot part you long from, dear Sally,

“Yours invariably.”

By the same post Mr. Wesley sent the following letter to his sister-in-law:—“Dear Sister,—The account which Mr. Bradburn gave me of my brother’s removal was very short and unsatisfactory. But the account which Sally has given me is such as it should be, particular and circumstantial. I doubt not but the few solemn words that he spoke, before he went hence, will prove a lasting blessing to all that heard them.

“If I may take upon me to give you a little piece of advice, it is, to keep little company. You have a handsome occasion of contracting your acquaintance, and retaining only a small,

select number, such as you can do good to, and receive good from. I am, my dear sister,

“Your affectionate friend and brother.”

The funeral of this honoured Minister took place on the 5th of April. His remains, by his own desire, were interred in the churchyard of St. Mary-le-bone, near his own residence in Chesterfield-street. The pall was supported by eight Clergymen of the Church of England. In addition to his name and age, the following lines are inscribed upon his tomb-stone. They were written by himself on the death of one of his friends; but could not be more justly applied to any other person.

With poverty of spirit blest,
Rest, happy saint, in Jesus rest;
A sinner saved, through grace forgiven,
Redeem'd from earth to reign in heaven!
Thy labours of unwearied love,
By thee forgot, are crown'd above;
Crown'd, through the mercy of thy Lord,
With a free, full, immense reward!

As a friendship of the most tender and confidential kind had through life subsisted between Mr. John and Charles Wesley, and they had been labourers together for half a century in carrying on a deep and extensive work of God, it was John's desire that their remains should rest together in the tomb which he had prepared in the ground connected with the chapel in the City-road; but this Charles declined, because the ground was not consecrated.* It was under the influence of this disappointment that Mr. John Wesley wrote the paper on the inutility of consecrating burying-grounds, which he inserted in his monthly Magazine. He thought that churches and chapels require no consecration but that which arises from the celebration of God's worship; and that

* “It is a pity but the remains of my brother had been deposited with mine. Certainly that ground is holy as any in England; and it contains a large quantity of ‘bonny dead.’”—Private letter of Mr. Wesley to the Rev. Peard Dickenson.

Mr. Wesley here alludes to a dying saying of Haliburton: “I was just thinking on the pleasant spot of earth I shall get to lie in, beside Mr. Rutherford, Mr. Forrester, and Mr. Anderson. I shall come in as the little one among them, and I shall get my pleasant George in my hand; and O we shall be a knot of bonny dust!”

burying-grounds are made sacred by the ashes of the pious dead, rather than by ceremonies of Popish origin, which the New Testament never mentions.

Some persons have thought that the part which Mr. Charles Wesley took in opposition to his brother's ordinations, and against the administration of the sacraments by any man on whose head the hands of a Bishop had not been laid, must have rendered him an object of dislike and jealousy among the Methodist Preachers generally. But this is a mistake. Those who knew him best were convinced of his integrity and conscientiousness; and though they might dissent from his views of ecclesiastical order, they admired the man, whom they saw to be as generous as he was upright. Mr. Bradburn, for instance, whose opinions concerning episcopal ordination were very different from those of Mr. Charles Wesley, was honoured with the personal friendship of this eminent man, and in return regarded him with the profoundest respect and admiration; as is manifest from the following letter, which he addressed to Mr. Bardsley, a brother Preacher, a few days after Mr. Charles Wesley's interment:—

“Mr. Charles Wesley died just as any one who knew him might have expected. I have had the pleasure and profit of his acquaintance and correspondence for years, and shall have a great loss of a true friend now that he is gone. I visited him often in his illness, and sat up with him all night, the last but one of his life. He had no disorder but old age. He had very little pain. His mind was as calm as a summer evening. He told me he should die in March, some months before. He often said, ‘I have no particular desire to die; but I want the whole will of God to be done in and by me.’ He always seemed fearful of suffering something dreadful before death. In this he was quite disappointed; for no one could pass easier out of time than he did. He said many things about the cause of God, and the Preachers, that did him much credit. He frequently said, ‘I am a mere sinner, saved by the grace of God my Saviour.’ This sort of language one would expect from most professors; but from one of his years and experience, it was truly pleasing.

“His general character was such as at once adorned human nature and the Christian religion. He was candid, without cowardly weakness; and firm, without headstrong obstinacy.

He was equally free from the cold indifference of lifeless formality, and the imaginary fire of enthusiastic wildness. He never was known to say anything in commendation of himself, and never was at a loss for something good to say of his divine Master. His soul was formed for friendship in affliction, and his words and letters were as a precious balm to those of a sorrowful spirit. He was courteous, without dissimulation; and honest, without vulgar roughness. He was truly a great scholar, without pedantic ostentation. He was a great Christian, without any pompous singularity; and a great Divine, without the least contempt for the meanest of his brethren. He died, or rather fell asleep, on Saturday, March 29th, 1788, in the eightieth year of his age. I preached his funeral sermon at West-street, and at the new chapel, on Sunday, April 6th, to an inconceivable concourse of people, of every description, from 2 Sam. iii. 38: 'A Prince and a great man is fallen this day in Israel.' I am not sure but I shall publish the sermon. Our chapels are hung in black around the pulpits, desks, &c., and all the people are in mourning."

Such was the latter end of Mr. Charles Wesley, one of the most useful and gifted men of his age. Perhaps the state of extreme physical exhaustion in which he lay for several days, rendered him incapable of those rapturous joys with which some persons have been indulged in their last hours; but had they been vouchsafed to him, it is doubtful whether he would have made them known. The mystical views of religion which he received in early life, and which he again cherished after he had desisted from his itinerancy, led him rather to conceal than declare what the Lord had done for him. Yet thus much we learn, that he forgave all his enemies, and prayed for them. He renounced all confidence in himself, and in the spirit of a penitent trusted in Christ alone for acceptance and eternal life. Hence his conscience was at rest, and his heart was all gratitude, submission, and hope, longing after his heavenly home. Thus did he exemplify his own inimitable verses:—

Walk with me through the dreadful shade;
And, certified that thou art mine,
My spirit, calm and undismay'd,
I shall into thy hands resign.

Long as my God shall lend me breath,
My every pulse shall beat for Him.

Mr. John Wesley's kindness to his brother's family, after their bereavement, was in perfect consistency with his character, and honourable to him in the highest degree. This is strikingly apparent from the following letters, selected from several others which he addressed to his sister-in-law, and his intelligent niece :—

“ Blackburn, April 21st. You will excuse me, my dear sister, for troubling you with so many letters ; for I know not how to help it : I find you and your family so much upon my heart, both for your own sakes, and for the sake of my brother. But I am much easier now, that I find you are joined with honest John Collinson, whom I know to be not only a man of probity, but likewise a man of diligence and understanding. I am therefore persuaded he will spare no pains in doing for you what you wish to be done. So that I shall be hardly wanted among you, as he will fully supply my lack of service. I only wish both Charles and Sammy may follow your example, in keeping little company, and those of the best sort ; men of sound understanding, and solid piety ; for such only are fit for the acquaintance of men of sense. I commit you all to Him that loves you ; and am, my dear sister,

“ Ever yours.”

On his arrival in London, in the month of July, he says in his Journal, “ I spent an hour in Chesterfield-street, with my widowed sister and her children. They all seemed inclined to make the right use of the late providential dispensation.” A few days after this interview he resumed his correspondence :—

“ City-road, July 25th. My dear Sister,—You know well what regard I had for Miss Gwynne, before she was Mrs. Wesley. And it has not ceased from that time till now. I am persuaded it never will. Therefore I will speak without reserve just what comes into my mind. I have sometimes thought you are a little like me. My wife used to tell me, ‘ My dear, you are too generous. You don't know the value of money.’ I could not wholly deny the charge. Possibly you may sometimes lean to the same extreme. I know you are of a generous spirit. You have an open heart, and an open hand.

But may it not sometimes be too open, more so than your circumstances will allow? Is it not an instance of Christian, as well as worldly, prudence, to cut our coat according to our cloth? If your circumstances are a little narrower, should you not contract your expenses too? I need but just give you this hint, which I doubt not you will take kindly from, my dear Sally,

“Your affectionate friend and brother.”

“North-Green, August 7th. Dear Sister,—As the Conference ended yesterday afternoon, my hurry is now a little abated. I cannot blame you for having thoughts of removing out of that large house. If you could find a lodging to your mind, it would be preferable on several accounts: and perhaps you might live as much without care as you did in the great mansion at Garth.

“I was yesterday inquiring of Dr. Whitehead, whether Harrogate would not be better for Sally than the sea-water. He seems to think it would: and I should not think much of giving her ten or twenty pounds, to make a trial. But I wish she could see him first, which she may do any day between seven and eight in the morning. I am, my dear Sally,

“Yours most affectionately.”

“City-road, Dec. 21st. My dear Sister,—It is undoubtedly true, that some silly people (whether in the society or not I cannot tell) have frequently talked in that manner, both of my brother and me. They have said that we were well paid for our labours. And indeed so we were, but not by man. Yet this is no more than we were to expect, especially from busy bodies in other men’s matters. And it is no more possible to restrain their tongues, than it is to bind up the wind. But it is sufficient for us, that our own conscience condemned us not; and that our record is with the Most High.

“What has concerned me more than this idle slander is a trial of another kind. I supposed, when John Atlay left me, that he had left me one or two hundred pounds beforehand. On the contrary, I am one or two hundred pounds behind-hand, and shall not recover myself till after Christmas. Some of the first moneys I receive, I shall set apart for you; and in everything that is in my power, you may depend upon the willing assistance of, dear Sally,

“Your affectionate friend and brother.”

The following are some of his letters to his niece, written about the same period:—

“ April 21st. What a comfort it is, my dear Sally, to think, ‘ The Lord liveth ! ’ nay, and that our intercourse with our human friends will be more perfect hereafter than it can be while we are encumbered with the house of clay. You did not send me those verses before. They were very proper to be his last, as being worthy of one bought by the blood of the Lamb, and just going forth to meet Him !

“ Now, my Sally, make the best of life. Whereunto you have attained, hold fast. But you have not yet received the Spirit of adoption, crying, Abba, Father ! See that you do not stop short of it. The promise is for you ! If you feel your want, it will soon be supplied ; and God will seal that word upon your heart, ‘ I am merciful to thy unrighteousness ; and thy sins and iniquities I remember no more.’ Dear Sally, adieu ! ”

“ Newcastle-upon-Tyne, May 29th. My dear Sally,—How often does our Lord say to us, by his adorable providence, ‘ What I do, thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter : ’ and how unspeakable is our gain, if we learn only this, to *trust* God farther than we can *see* Him ! But it is a stroke that you have long expected. One of fourscore has lived out his date of years. And it is not strange, that he is taken away, but that I am left. The great lesson which you have to learn is, ‘ Take no thought for the morrow : ’ if you do, your fault brings its own punishment. You are to live to-day. You have still a friend, the medicine of life ! And you have your great Friend always at hand. There is a rule for *you* : ‘ When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God ; ’ and it is not lost labour. ‘ May the peace of God rest upon you.’ So prays

“ Yours in tender affection.”

“ Bristol, Sept. 26th. Dear Sally,—The reading of those poisonous writers, the Mystics, confounded the intellects both of my brother and Mr. Fletcher, and made them afraid of (what ought to have been their glory) the letting their light shine before men. Therefore I do not wonder that he was so unwilling to speak of himself, and consequently that you knew so little about him. The same wrong humility continually inculcated by those writers, would induce him to dis-

continue the writing his journal. When I see those detached papers you speak of, I shall easily judge whether any of them are proper to be published. Do you not want money? You can speak freely to, my dear Sally,

“Yours most affectionately.”

Among other valuable manuscripts which were left by Mr. Charles Wesley were three small quarto volumes of hymns, and poems on various subjects; he left also a poetic version of a considerable part of the book of Psalms, which was inserted, with short notes, in the Arminian Magazine. But his chief work, and that upon which he bestowed the greatest pains, consists of hymns on the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, in five quarto volumes. The following memoranda, at the end of the last volume, show something of the labour which the pious author expended upon the work:—

“Finished, April 24, 1765.

⊖. Δ.

The revisal finished, April 24, 1774.

⊖. Δ.

Another revisal finished, Jan. 28, 1779.

⊖. Δ.

A third revisal finished, Feb. 29, 1780.

⊖. Δ.

A fifth revisal finished, Aug. 6, 1783.

⊖. Δ.

A sixth finished, Oct. 28, 1784.

⊖. Δ.

The seventh, if not the last, Jan. 11, 1786.

Gloria Tri-uni DEO!

The LAST finished, May 11, 1787.

HALLELUJAH!”

“Many of these,” says the Rev. John Wesley, “are little, if any, inferior to his former poems, having the same justness and strength of thought, with the same beauty of expression; yea, the same keenness of wit on proper occasions, as bright and piercing as ever.” Having at a subsequent period read them with greater care, he adds, “Some are bad; some mean; some most excellently good. They give the true sense of Scripture, always in good English, generally in good verse. Many of them are equal to most, if not to any, he ever wrote; but some still savour of that poisonous Mysti-

cism, with which we were both not a little tainted before we went to America. This gave a gloomy cast, first to his mind, and then to many of his verses. This made him frequently describe religion as a melancholy thing : this so often sounded in his ears, ‘ To the desert ! ’ and strongly persuaded in favour of solitude.”

These invaluable compositions have become, by purchase, the property of the Wesleyan Conference, and it is hoped will, at some future period, form a part of a uniform edition of the entire Works of this Prince of devotional poets.

A passage in a private letter of the late Mr. Wilberforce, published by his sons in his Life, requires some explanation in this place. That excellent man says, “ From respect to that great and good man, Mr. Charles Wesley, I many years ago prevailed on two friends to join in allowing his widow an annuity, which she still receives. I have often, I own, thought it ■ great reflection on the Methodists, that they suffered such a person to be in real want, as she was when I undertook her cause.” *

Had Mr. Wilberforce acquainted himself with the facts of this case, perhaps he would have thought “ the Methodists ” less to blame than he assumed. It has been already stated that Mr. John Wesley secured to his brother, on his marriage with Miss Gwynne, the payment of one hundred pounds a year, during his life, which was to be continued to his wife, in case she should survive him. This sum, which was independent of the salary that he received from the Stewards of the societies to whom he preached, was duly paid as long as Mr. John Wesley lived ; and he made provision in his will for its payment to his brother’s widow to the end of her life. After Mr. John Wesley’s death, Mrs. Wesley and her family, thinking perhaps that the continued union of the Methodist Connexion was doubtful, and this annuity uncertain, requested that the principal might be paid, and proposed to relinquish all future claims. A request coming from such a quarter could not be denied. But instead of purchasing another annuity with the money, or lending it on better security than it was thought the Methodist Conference could give, Mrs. Wesley and her family lived upon it, till it was all expended.

* Vol. iii., p. 511.

But that she was found in a condition of "real want," as stated by Mr. Wilberforce, is more than doubtful. In this he was certainly mistaken. She lived with her eldest son, who was one of the most accomplished musicians of the age; and with her daughter, who was scarcely less accomplished in literature. The necessities of their aged mother were few; and it was impossible that they should suffer her to be destitute of even the comforts of life. She might have no certain income of her own, and be dependent upon them; but this is very different from being "in real want." Her son and daughter were both in the receipt of considerable sums of money, the fruit of their own talents.

After giving proof of the want of confidence in "the Methodists," and of deficient forethought in the management of their own affairs, it may well be supposed that Mrs. Wesley and her children would wish to conceal her condition from the people to whose care she had been left by her revered husband and brother-in-law. Yet when it was known that she had expended her property, "the Methodists" were not less generous than even Mr. Wilberforce. They gave her an annuity as long as she lived, and that, if we are not mistaken, to a larger amount than even he procured for her; they also gave an annuity to her daughter; then to her son Charles; and at last, to Samuel. It would not be difficult to show that Mr. Charles Wesley and his family received from "the Methodists," in consideration of the benefits derived from his incomparable hymns, not less than ten thousand pounds. This sum is indeed not too large, considering the nature of Mr. Charles Wesley's bequest; (for his hymns are such as gold can never purchase;) yet it is sufficient to prove that the pre-eminent services which he rendered to the cause of spiritual religion have not been quite overlooked, and that the censure which has been sent forth in Mr. Wilberforce's name might well have been spared. It is as unjust as it is unseemly. To publish, without due inquiry, *ex-parte* statements, to the injury of a people who have merited no blame, is "a great reflection" upon the parties who thus offend, let them be who they may. The attempt to exalt such a man as Mr. Wilberforce, by depreciating "the Methodists," as if they had less respect for one of the Wesleys than he possessed, like the endeavour to raise his fair fame as the oppo-

nent of the slave-trade, by undervaluing the services of the venerable Clarkson, is in bad taste. His sons, who have done this, have not been guided by a sound discretion. It is a proof of the substantial worth of their father's character, that it has not suffered much in consequence of the means which they have adopted to elevate it in the public estimation.

It is only needful to add, that Mrs. Wesley, having survived her husband about thirty-four years, died Dec. 28th, 1822, at the advanced age of ninety-six. Sarah died at Bristol, when on a visit to that city, on the 19th of September, 1828, aged sixty-eight years. Charles died in London, May 23d, 1834, in the seventy-seventh year of his age. Samuel also died in London, on the 11th of October, 1837, in seventy-second year of his age. Charles and Sarah were never married. They were both members of the Methodist society. Samuel left several children, who are now living.

In the Minutes of the annual Conferences, Mr. John Wesley was accustomed from year to year to insert short notices of the deceased Preachers. The following is his account of his brother, contained in the obituary of 1788 :—

“Mr. Charles Wesley, who, after spending fourscore years with much sorrow and pain, quietly retired into Abraham's bosom. He had no disease ; but after a gradual decay of some months,

‘The weary wheels of life stood still at last.’

His least praise. was his talent for poetry : although Dr. Watts did not scruple to say that that single poem ‘Wrestling Jacob’ was worth all the verses he himself had written.”

It was not the intention of Mr. John Wesley to satisfy himself with this laconic record concerning his brother. He immediately began to collect materials for a biographical account of the man with whom he had been through life so entirely one in heart ; and he requested his niece to furnish him with all the facts she could recollect that could assist him in the compilation of such a work. But life with him was too far advanced, and his other engagements too numerous, to admit of the fulfilment of his design. He died before he had made much progress in the compilation. No man was so well qualified to execute the responsible task ; as no other person had so thorough a knowledge of the deceased.

The following epitaph is inscribed upon a marble tablet in the City-road chapel. The sentence which is placed at the head of it Mr. Charles Wesley is said to have frequently uttered :—

“ God buries his workmen, but carries on his work.”

Sacred to the Memory

OF

THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.,

EDUCATED AT WESTMINSTER SCHOOL,

AND SOMETIME STUDENT AT CHRIST-CHURCH, OXFORD.

AS A PREACHER,

HE WAS EMINENT FOR ABILITY, ZEAL, AND USEFULNESS,

BEING LEARNED WITHOUT PRIDE,

AND PIOUS WITHOUT OSTENTATION ;

TO THE SINCERE, DIFFIDENT CHRISTIAN,

A SON OF CONSOLATION ;

BUT TO THE VAIN BOASTER, THE HYPOCRITE, AND THE PROFANE,

A SON OF THUNDER.

HE WAS THE FIRST WHO RECEIVED THE NAME OF METHODIST ;

AND, UNITING WITH HIS BROTHER, THE REV. JOHN WESLEY,

IN THE PLAN OF ITINERANT PREACHING,

ENDURED HARDSHIP, PERSECUTION, AND DISGRACE,

AS A GOOD SOLDIER OF JESUS CHRIST ;

CONTRIBUTING LARGELY, BY THE USEFULNESS OF HIS LABOURS,

TO THE FIRST FORMATION OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES

IN THESE KINGDOMS.

AS A CHRISTIAN POET HE STOOD UNRIVALLED ;

AND HIS HYMNS WILL CONVEY INSTRUCTION AND CONSOLATION

TO THE FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS,

AS LONG AS THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE IS UNDERSTOOD.

HE WAS BORN THE XVIII OF DECEMBER, MDCCVIII,

AND DIED THE XXIX OF MARCH, MDCCLXXXVIII,

A FIRM AND PIOUS BELIEVER IN THE DOCTRINES OF THE GOSPEL,

AND A SINCERE FRIEND TO THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MR. CHARLES WESLEY, like his brother John, was considerably below the middle stature. He was somewhat stouter than his brother, but not corpulent. There are persons now living who remember to have seen them both, with Dr. Coke, all at once engaged in the administration of the Lord's supper in the City-road chapel. These excellent Clergymen were all of the same diminutive height; and yet no other men of their day exerted a wider influence upon the world, or an influence that is likely to be more permanent. Charles was short-sighted, and abrupt and singular in his manners, but without the slightest approach to affectation. In honest simplicity of mind he was never surpassed. He has been spoken of as desultory in his habits: nothing, however, can exceed the neatness of his handwriting till he was far advanced in life, and the exactness with which he kept his pecuniary accounts. At college John is said to have often dreaded his visits. He would run against his brother's table; disarrange his papers; ask several questions in quick succession; and often retire without even waiting for the answers.

His attainments as a scholar were worthy of the advantages which he enjoyed, as a pupil of Westminster School, and a member of the University of Oxford. With the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French languages he was well acquainted. His son Samuel believed that he read German; but his daughter, when questioned on the subject, spoke doubtingly. In a letter addressed to him at Oxford by his father, he is urged to persevere in the study of Arabic, and of the mathematics; but it is probable that, after he left the University, he paid little attention to either of these branches of learning. Classical and biblical literature he cultivated to the end of his protracted life. His exact and critical knowledge of the holy Scriptures is strikingly manifest in his hymns. Among the Romans, Horace and Virgil

were his favourite authors. Large portions of the *Æneid* he had committed to memory, and occasionally repeated them, with unrivalled taste and spirit, for the gratification of his friends. Sometimes he did the same in self-defence. When Indivine, the drunken Captain with whom he sailed from Charlestown, poured forth volleys of invective against him, he defended himself by repeating Virgil in Latin; and once, when his unhappy sister-in-law, Mrs. John Wesley, had secured him and her husband in a room whence they could not escape, and then told them of their faults, real and imaginary, with a vehemence which they could neither resist nor interrupt, Charles bethought him of Virgil, and gave utterance to the strains of the Mantuan bard in such a manner as at length to obtain a respite, with permission to escape.

Considering his scholarship, taste, and genius, there can be no doubt, that, had he devoted himself to secular literature, he would have taken a high rank among the poets of Great Britain. He would have rivalled Dryden himself, whom he greatly resembles in fluency, copiousness, and power. The specimens which he has left, both in print and manuscript, prove that in grave satire he was not inferior to Churchill. When exposing the selfishness and disloyalty of the pretended patriots of his day, he is terribly severe. His invectives resemble successive flashes of lightning, which scathe every object that they strike. That men of bad morals should assume the character of public reformers, filled him with honest and irrepressible indignation. The following is a short specimen :—

What hope of safety for our realm
 From men who by destruction thrive?
 By violence seize the shatter'd helm,
 And madly let the vessel drive,
 Till, dash'd against the rocks, it break,
 And then they gather up the wreck.

Makers of wrecks, a desperate race,
 Who treason and rebellion love,
 Who spit in a mild Monarch's face,—
 Can they the public ills remove?
 Or, plunged themselves in depths of vice,
 Assist our sinking State to rise?

Proud, profligate, to evil sold,
 Their country's curse, reproach, and shame,
 Their lust of power, and thirst of gold,
 Cloking beneath the Patriot's name ;
 Shall these our liberties defend ?
 Shall these, who caused, our troubles end ?

Who their own countrymen destroy'd,
 Kindled and fed Rebellion's fire,
 And all their hellish arts employ'd
 To raise the civil discord higher ;
 Will these restore our happiness,
 Or give us back ■ lasting peace ?

Order and government they scorn,
 Forbid the slighted laws to reign,
 And while their injured King they spurn,
 The rabble's majesty maintain ;
 Those abject instruments of ill,
 Those tools of every tyrant's will !

First for themselves the Patriots care,
 And each sincerely seeks his own,
 Eager the public spoils to share,
 (Now they have pull'd their rivals down,)
 And all into their hands to seize,
 The meed of prosperous wickedness.

Through avarice and ambition, blind,
 Their schemes, bewilder'd, they pursue,
 Grasping at that they cannot find,
 Still undetermined what to do,
 Till some superior fiend appear,
 And claim the sovereign character.

Daring as Charles's spurious brood,
 Harden'd as Wilkes in wickedness,
 As dissolute as Fox, and lewd,
 Worthy of the Protector's place ;
 Worthy the place by right his own,
 Where Cromwell fills a burning throne !

In lighter satire he was also successful, when he chose that style of composition, which indeed he rarely tried, as not according with his general cast of thought and feeling. The subjoined sketch of "The Man of Fashion" shows with sufficient distinctness what he could have done, had popular literature been his profession :—

What is a modern man of fashion?
 A man of taste and dissipation;
 A busy man, without employment;
 A happy man, without enjoyment;
 Who squanders all his time and treasures,
 In empty joys, and tasteless pleasures;
 Visits, attendance, and attention,
 And courtly arts too low to mention.
 In sleep, and dress, and sport, and play,
 He throws his worthless life away;
 Has no opinions of his own,
 But takes from leading beaux the ton;
 Born to be flatter'd, and to flatter,
 The most important *thing* in nature,
 Wrapp'd up in self-sufficient pride,
 With his own virtues satisfied,
 With a disdainful smile or frown
 He on the riffraff crowd looks down;
 The world polite, his friends and HE,
 And all the rest are—nobody.

Taught by the great his smiles to sell,
 And how to write, and how to spell,
 The great his oracles he makes,
 Copies their vices and mistakes,
 Custom pursues, his only rule,
 And lives an ape, and dies a fool!

“But say, thou criticising clown,
 (If thou canst pull the ladies down,)
 What is a woman nicely bred,
 In every step by fashion led?”
 The proverb makes us understand her,
 What's sauce for goose is sauce for gander:
 From which I rightly reason thus:
 What's sauce for gander is for goose.—
 But here I for my faults atone,
 By letting the fair sex alone.

Had Mr. Charles Wesley practised himself largely in translation, there can be no doubt he would have excelled in that as much as in original composition. Various short specimens he has given in the prose writings of his brother; and these possess great merit. They are terse, and yet easy and poetical. The following is a beautiful imitation of the very tender Latin verses which Bishop Lowth wrote on the sudden death of his beloved daughter, who expired at the tea-table, in the family circle. Placing a cup of coffee upon the salver, she said, “Take this to the Bishop of Bristol.” The cup fell in an instant, with the hand by which it was

held ; and she expired without a groan, in her twenty-sixth year. The Prelate for whom the cup was designed, was the celebrated Bishop Newton, the learned author of the elaborate and valuable “ Dissertations on the Prophecies.”

*Cara, vale, ingenio præstans, pietate, pudore,
Et plusquam natæ nomine, cara, vale !
Cara Maria, vale ! At veniet felicius ævum
Quando iterum tecum, sim modo dignus, ero.
Cara, redi, lætâ tum dicam voce, paternos
Eia age in amplexus, cara Maria, redi !*

Farewell, my dearest child, farewell !
Wise, pious, good, beyond thy years !
Thy ravish'd excellence I feel
Bereaved—dissolved in softest tears.

But soon, if worthy of the grace,
I shall again behold thee nigh,
Again my dearest child embrace :
“ Haste, to my arms, Maria, fly !

“ To a fond father's arms return,”
I then in ecstasies shall say,
“ No more to part, no more to mourn,
But sing through one eternal day !”

Mr. Charles Wesley wrote several epitaphs upon his friends, all of which are of a thoroughly Christian character. A few of these may be properly introduced in this place. Mr. Charles Greenwood lived at Stoke-Newington. At his house Mr. Fletcher spent several months, during the severe illness which induced him to remove to Switzerland. His character and end are thus described :—

The blessed, tempted man, who always fear'd,
Hath laid triumphantly his burden down ;
Intrepid when the stingless foe appear'd,
He bow'd his head, and gain'd the victor's crown :
Exalted to a higher place above,
Who humbly chose on earth the lowest place,
His endless fears are lost in endless love,
His ceaseless prayers in never-ending praise.

Mr. Richard Boardman went as a Missionary to America, but returned to England when the war of independence broke out. He died suddenly. Concerning him Mr. Charles Wesley thus writes :—

With zeal for God, with love of souls inspired,
 Nor awed by dangers, nor by labours tired,
 Boardman in distant worlds proclaims the word
 To multitudes, and turns them to the Lord :
 But soon the bloody waste of war he mourns,
 And loyal from Rebellion's seat returns ;
 Nor yet at home, on eagles' pinions flies,
 And in a moment soars to paradise.

Mr. Peter Jaco was one of the early Itinerant Preachers. He was originally a Cornish fisherman, but became an able Minister of the New Testament. Hence the allusion in the first line of his epitaph :—

Fisher of men, ordain'd by Christ alone,
 Immortal souls he for his Saviour won ;
 With living faith, and calmly fervent zeal,
 Perform'd and suffer'd the Redeemer's will,
 Unmoved in all the storms of life remain'd,
 And in the good old ship the haven gain'd.

Mr. Richard Kemp was a London Methodist, the Steward of the society, and one of the excellent of the earth. His epitaph is of considerable length ; for Mr. Charles Wesley greatly admired the character of this Christian loyalist :—

Fond of his King, and to his country true,
 He paid to Cæsar and to God their due ;
 And soon experiencing the Saviour's grace,
 Fought the good fight, and won the Christian race ;
 In every state, in every duty shined,
 Generous and just, beneficent and kind ;
 Friend of distress, and father to the poor,
 Active to do, and patient to endure ;
 No injuries his steadfast soul could move,
 Abate his zeal, or weary out his love :
 A steward wise, a doer of the word,
 An humble, faithful follower of his Lord,
 Close in his dear Redeemer's steps he trod,
 Took up his daily cross, and lived for God,
 Till summon'd to complete his sacrifice,
 And claim his purchased mansion in the skies,
 He more than conqueror in death appear'd,
 And trampled on a foe he never fear'd !
 O that I might, like him, my life resign,
 O might his soul's eternal state be mine !

C. W.

ON MRS. LUNELL.

A follower of the bleeding Lamb
 Her burden here laid down,
 The cross of Jesu's pain and shame
 Exchanging for a crown.

True witness for her pardoning Lord,
 Whose blood she felt applied,
 She kept the faith, obey'd the word,
 And lived a saint, and died.

Reader, her life and death approve,
 Believe thy sins forgiven ;
 Be pure in heart, be fill'd with love,
 And follow her to heaven.

ON MISS MOLLY LEYSON.

Beneath a daughter of affliction lies,
 The tears for ever banish'd from her eyes ;
 Wash'd in the laver of atoning blood,
 The spirit here hath dropp'd her earthly load,
 Fulfill'd her visit, and return'd to God.

O that our flesh, like hers, might rest in hope,
 Till earth and ocean give their prisoners up,
 Till the great Object of our love and fear
 With myriads of his shining friends appear,
 And all with shouts proclaim the heavenly Bridegroom here !

ON MRS. POPKINS.

A Christian here her glorious journey ends,
 Caught from her earthly to her heavenly friends ;
 Mature for God below, her work fulfill'd,
 Her prayers accepted, and her pardon seal'd,
 The spotless soul, a native of the sky,
 Has paid her visit, and return'd on high.

Mourner, to Heaven thy earnest wishes breathe,
 And live her life, that thou may'st die her death ;
 Silent and sad pass through this weeping vale,
 With arms divine the glorious throne assail ;
 Assured the crown of life shall then be given,
 And God shall wipe away thy tears in heaven.

ON MRS. HORTON, 1786.

A meek and lowly follower of the Lamb,
She more than conquer'd all in Jesu's name,
Wash'd in his blood, and kept her garments white,
And blameless walk'd in her Redeemer's sight,
Till fill'd with love she fainted on his breast,
And found within his arms her everlasting rest.

The epitaph which is placed upon his own tombstone was written by him for that of his friend Mr. Latrobe, the Moravian Minister.

The soul of Mr. Charles Wesley was formed for friendship. He possessed such a frankness of disposition, combined with such warmth of affection, and integrity of purpose, as at once commanded the esteem and love of all who were like-minded. His sympathies were deep and tender; so that his friendship was felt to be of inestimable value, especially in seasons of affliction, when help is the most needed. He was indeed "a brother born for" the benefit of those who are in "adversity," and possessed great power to soothe and cheer. The pain and sickness in which much of his life was spent, the successive deaths of five children, added to the natural and gracious tenderness of his heart, enabled him so to enter into the views and feelings of the sorrowful, that they were at once strengthened and encouraged, and blessed God for the consolation of which he made his servant the instrument.

His personal intercourse with his pious friends was indeed interrupted by death; but his affection for them, after they had entered into the celestial paradise, was still cordially cherished. Of the reality and nearness of the spiritual world, and of the certain blessedness of those who die in the Lord, he had a perfect conviction; and many times, when his friends died, his spirit struggled to get free from the fleshly burden, and accompany them in their flight to the heavenly world. When they had entered into rest, their spirits seemed still to be near, and to converse with him thought to thought, and feeling to feeling. To this solemnly-interesting subject he often refers in his poetry; and the following beautiful hymn, which he left among his papers, fully expresses his views concerning it. It is entitled, "Commu-

nion with a Saint departed.” Who the “saint” was we are not informed.

Ah ! my dear, departed friend,
 Can I cease remembering thee ?
 Must our sacred friendship end
 With the life of misery ?
 From the fleshly dungeon freed,
 Dead to all thou lovedst before,
 Dead to me, entirely dead,
 Shall I clasp thy soul no more ?

Wherefore, when we met below,
 Struck with sympathy divine,
 Pleased its counterpart to know,
 Flew my soul to mix with thine ?
 Blazed the pure expanded flame,
 Such as burns in those above ;
 Love pervaded all my frame,
 Heavenly, everlasting love.

Wing'd with infinite desire,
 Wherefore doth my soul remain,
 If we *all* at death expire,
 If we ne'er must meet again ?
 Say, thou questionable shade,
 Once so intimately dear,
 Art thou far removed when dead ?
 None on earth is half so near.

Could the greedy grave devour
 One whom I this moment feel,
 Lured by some mysterious power
 To that world invisible ?
 Surely now her bliss I share,
 Live her life which never dies :
 Yes, my old companion there
 Draws me after to the skies !

A similar feeling towards him was indulged by many when he had entered into rest. Several years after his death his memory was cherished by his friends with the strongest affection.

His friendship for his brother was inviolable. It was so when, “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness,” they vainly endeavoured to obtain purity of heart before they were

justified. Their regard for each other assumed a higher character when, through a faith of the operation of God, they “received the atonement,” and the promised gift of the Holy Spirit, filling them with peace and joy, subduing the otherwise unconquerable evils of their nature, and inspiring them with all holy and benevolent affections. From that period they were indeed

“True yoke-fellows by love compell’d
To labour in the Gospel field ;”

and nothing could dissolve their oneness of heart.

As they advanced in their work, they entertained different views, not of its nature, but of the manner in which it should be carried on, and the objects to which it should be directed. Both of them had the fullest conviction that the revival of religion which they everywhere witnessed was the work of God ; for no human power could make thousands of ignorant, miserable, and ungodly people permanently wise, and holy, and happy. Their spiritual children, both in life and death, exhibited all the characteristics of apostolical Christianity. Charles was anxious that this revival of religion should be conducted in subserviency to the Church of England, in which he thought it would ultimately merge. John was mainly intent upon extending it to the utmost possible limit, both at home and abroad, leaving its connexion with the Church to be determined by providential circumstances. He believed that men might be saved out of the Church of England ; but he knew that “without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” His ordinations, therefore, and the favour which he showed to the Preachers and people who refused to attend the Church service, gave Charles exquisite pain, but diminished not his affection. He himself animadverted upon some of John’s acts ; but he would allow no other person to censure him. He refused to write an epitaph on Mr. Hervey, whose “Eleven Letters” contain many violations of candour and truth ; thinking it enough for him, as the “brother” of the injured man, to “forgive” the wrong that had been done. Lady Huntingdon attempted to alienate him from his brother, by telling him, in a private letter, that John was a teacher of “heresy” and “Popery ;” but, deeply as he was indebted to her kindness, he rebuked her for her unseemly

bigotry, and declared that death itself should never separate him from the brother of his heart. He was linked to him by no selfish feeling, or mere instinct of nature, but by the "love that never faileth;" and his generous friendship was returned by his brother with equal fidelity and warmth.

In the various domestic relations the conduct of Mr. Charles Wesley was most exemplary. His filial reverence and affection towards both his parents were as profound as they were justly merited. Towards both his brothers, and all his sisters, he was an example of fraternal kindness. They witnessed through life his readiness to serve them as much as lay in his power. What he was as a husband the preceding narrative declares. To his wife he disclosed the secrets of his heart, with perfect confidence and unreserve; and in her society he sought for solace when troubled with the affairs of the world and the church. His concern for her comfort, his sympathy with her in affliction, and, above all, his pious solicitude for her spiritual improvement, are attested in the whole of his correspondence with her, of which many specimens have been given. Several of his hymns were originally written for her use and benefit. They were acts of supplication in times of necessity and sorrow; of resignation under bereavements; or of adoring gratitude for divine mercies. He received her as a gift from God; he regarded her as his best earthly friend; and he ever treated her as an heir with himself of eternal life. Often did he remind her, that the most important end of their union was their mutual improvement in personal holiness; and most assiduously did he labour to bring her into increasing union with Christ, their living Head. In a letter which he addressed to her when he felt his strength decay, he says, "My best of Friends,—I am going the way of all the earth; and what shall I do for you before we part? I can only pray, and very imperfectly, that the providential end of our meeting may be answered upon you in both worlds. You married me, that you might be holier and happier to all eternity. If you have received less spiritual good than you expected, it is chiefly my fault. I have not set you the pattern I ought. For the same reason, I have been of so little use to my children. But it is too late to attempt it now. My night cometh, or rather is come. I leave you to the God of all grace, who is ready to supply all

your wants. Time fails me for the rest. I may have another opportunity ; I may not. The Lord be yours and your children's portion ! ” Such were the humbling views which this Christian husband and parent entertained concerning himself !

He doubtless fell into an error in bringing up both his sons to the musical profession. But he was led to this decision by the strong bias of their minds, and the superior genius which they discovered in composition and performance. There are few fathers, it is presumed, who could, under the same circumstances, have come to a different determination. All the world admired the powers of his precocious boys. Royalty itself was charmed into admiration ; and old musicians wept for joy when they heard the organ, under the plastic touch of the young Wesleys, express every variation and combination of sound. His children were accustomed, to the end of their lives, to speak of him as the kindest and best of fathers. That he knew the true theory of domestic government is obvious from his hymns on that subject ; and if in anything he failed, as the head of a family, it was in the maintenance of his just authority. Yet he would not suffer his son Samuel to attend the theatres ; nor would he tolerate in any member of his family what he deemed offensive in the sight of God. His children were mostly educated by himself ; and the letters which he addressed to them when they were from home, many of which have been preserved, express the tenderness of his love, and his yearning desire for their salvation.

Mrs. Susanna Wesley is well known to have disapproved of the Revolution of 1688. Yet none of her sons inherited her views. Her son Samuel was a stanch Tory, but not a Jacobite ; and men more loyal to the House of Brunswick than were her sons John and Charles never existed. All their influence through life they exerted on the side of the Protestant monarchy, which at some periods was in considerable danger. Both of them freely used the press in behalf of the Brunswick dynasty, whose mild and equal sway has conferred upon the nation the most substantial benefits. Democracy, whatever name it may assume, Mr. Charles Wesley could not endure. Of the incendiary Wilkes, and the men who led the way in the American war, he speaks in language

of the severest condemnation. Fox and Burke also receive their share of vituperation in his poetry, as men of mischievous principles and habits. Of Burke, however, it is but justice to say, that it was his early political career which Mr. Charles Wesley condemned; for he was in his grave when that eloquent and philosophic Statesman rendered such good service to the cause of constitutional monarchy on the breaking out of the French Revolution.

With Mr. Charles Wesley, loyalty was a part of religion. The King he regarded as God's vicegerent; and hence he obeyed the laws, and supported the throne, not from worldly or selfish motives, but for conscience' sake. Some of the most Christianly-loyal compositions in the English language are unquestionably his hymns for the King. Several of these he published; and many others he left among his manuscripts. Unfashionable as his principles may at present be, they are those of the New Testament.

If we may judge from the success of his preaching, he greatly excelled in that important branch of ministerial duty. For upwards of fifteen years, after he had obtained the Christian salvation, he was incessantly employed as an Itinerant. He travelled from the Land's End to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, through a considerable part of Wales and Ireland, ministering the word of life in churches, private houses, and the open air, with a zeal which many waters could not quench, which no violence of opposition could daunt, and with an effect not at all inferior to that of either his brother or Mr. Whitefield.

There was nothing artificial in his sermons. To a strictly logical arrangement, and the arts of secular oratory, he was indifferent. His discourses were the effusions of the heart, rather than the offspring of the intellect, or of the imagination. They were not characterized by abstract reasoning, or by showy ornament. Of the Bible he was a diligent and enraptured student; and its facts, doctrines, language, and imagery were indelibly engraven upon his mind. In the delivery of God's word he expected and received the promised aid of the Holy Spirit; and under the divine unction he spoke with irresistible power and authority. His heart was inflamed with zeal for the honour of Christ, and yearned over the souls of the people; the tears ran down his cheeks; his tongue was loosed; and he poured forth the truth of God, in

the very phraseology of inspiration, with an effect that was overwhelming. He gave such views of the evil of sin, and of the certain damnation of the impenitent and unregenerate, as terrified the consciences of the ungodly and the sinner, who fell down upon their knees, and, in bitter anguish, called upon God for his mercy. At the same time, he expatiated upon the perfect sacrifice of Christ, the efficacy of his blood, the tenderness of his compassion, and the freeness of his grace, with such a power of conviction, as to induce those whose spirits were contrite *even then* to believe to the saving of their souls. He generally delivered his message in short and pointed sentences, which all could understand, and all could feel. When his own heart was deeply impressed, he not unfrequently extended his sermon to the length of two hours, and even more ; for he felt that he had a work to accomplish. The people were ignorant and wicked. They needed instruction, conversion, salvation. To turn them from sin to Christ was the very end of his preaching ; and he knew not how to close the service, and dismiss the poor guilty souls around him, until this great design of the divine mercy was fulfilled. Often was his heart gladdened by success. Under his ministry many a hardened sinner began to pray ; and from the religious services which he conducted, even in the open air, many a penitent publican went to his house justified. In the latter years of his life he was so enfeebled by age, disease, and sorrow, that his preaching was rather deliberate and tender, than powerful and awakening ; yet on some occasions, to the end of his life, it partook of the vehemence and energy which had characterized it in his earlier years.

In a few cases he followed the example of the early Fathers of the church, in giving a mystical interpretation to particular passages of Scripture, which was not intended by the Holy Ghost, and which a just criticism therefore would not allow. The Jewish church, for instance, depressed by the Babylonian invasion and captivity, is personified by the weeping Prophet, and introduced as saying, in the depth and bitterness of her grief, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." (Lam. i. 12.) From this most affecting appeal Mr. Charles Wesley sometimes preached,

representing it as addressed by the Lord Jesus to careless people of every class, who live regardless of the evil of sin, and of the sacrifice which was offered as an atonement for it. From the parable of the good Samaritan, also, which is designed to inculcate the duty of humanity, even to strangers, he often took occasion to show the miserable state of fallen man, and the compassion of Christ as a Saviour. In these and a few other cases of a similar nature a degree of violence was done to the sacred text ; yet the doctrine taught was not fanciful, but the inspired truth of God. The texts, legitimately interpreted, would not support the doctrine of the sermons, and therefore should not have been selected for the purpose ; but the doctrine itself was deducible from the general tenor of the sacred volume. The sermons therefore were blessed to the people ; for the Holy Ghost will put honour upon his own truth whenever it is faithfully inculcated. Yet the most excellent way is that of taking every passage of holy writ in its legitimate sense. The leading truths of Christianity are supported by such a body of scriptural evidence, that there is no need to have recourse to doubtful authority. Mr. Charles Wesley was not singular in these inadvertencies ; but they are not to be defended nor imitated.

There was a peculiarity in his mental constitution, which serves to explain many things in his conduct that would otherwise appear inexplicable. Above almost every other man, he was the child of feeling ; so that it was with the utmost difficulty he ever divested himself of a deep and solemn impression that had been made upon his mind. When once he had seriously received any principles, and regarded them as true and important, he generally retained them to the end of his life. He indeed entertained counter-principles, and cherished them with equal tenacity, but without abandoning the old ones. Through many years, therefore, he entertained on various subjects two sets of principles, and alternately acted upon them, with equal sincerity : nor does it appear that he ever thought of reconciling them with each other, or even suspected their inconsistency.

When he and his brother returned from Georgia, they both held the same defective and erroneous theological views ; and it would be very difficult to point out the slightest differ-

ence in their spiritual state. At that time John, with comparative readiness, but with due caution, received the doctrine of present salvation from sin by faith in the Lord Jesus, as taught by Peter Böhler. Not so Charles. He was Böhler's English tutor, and may therefore be fairly supposed to have had more intercourse with this intelligent and pious stranger than his brother; yet it was not till the day before the learned German left London for America, that Charles received this scriptural doctrine; nor even then, till he was broken by disease, and there appeared little hope that he would live many days longer. In this state of affliction, suspended between life and death, burdened with a sense of guilt and unholiness, he received the animating truth, and soon after by faith entered into a state of spiritual rest and joy.

The doctrine which he then received, he never renounced; and from this time his creed was decidedly improved: yet was he never thoroughly divested of the unevangelical mysticism which in early life he learned from Mr. Law and other writers. To the all-important tenet of justification by faith he adhered with undeviating tenacity; and also to the fact, that, in the order of nature, justification precedes sanctification, although the two blessings can never be separated from each other. He also believed that the vital faith in Christ, by which the sinner obtains acceptance with God, is immediately followed by the Spirit of adoption, crying in the heart, *Abba, Father*. Thus far he thought with his brother. But on the question of the abiding witness of adoption, and on that of progressive and entire sanctification, he vacillated to the end of his life, according to the state of his own feelings. In accordance with the gloomy tenets of his early and erring guides, he imagined that the witness of the Spirit is occasionally withdrawn by an act of the divine sovereignty, and not as the consequence of actual sin; so that the children of God are sometimes left in the deepest mental darkness and anguish, in order to their trial and purification: an opinion for which, as his brother has shown,* there is no foundation in the Scriptures of truth. In some of his hymns he most distinctly assumes that the state of entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, (including deliverance from all sin, and

* In his sermon on the Wilderness State, and in that on Heaviness through manifold Temptations.

loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength,) is attainable by faith, and therefore attainable *now*: but in others of his hymns, he censures those who profess to have attained to this state, and represents it as only the result of faith, labour, and suffering, especially mental suffering, continued to the end of life. The sincerity with which he held these discordant views is manifest from this consideration,—that he has embodied them in the most solemn forms of devotion. These peculiarities in his teaching gave considerable uneasiness to his brother, who therefore deemed it requisite to caution some of his correspondents against the “poisonous Mysticism” which Charles occasionally, and in his gloomy moods, introduced into his hymns; and in a tone of expostulation he mentions the subject in his letters to Charles, explaining the views which they both avowed in the early Conferences, and, with their colleagues, solemnly pledged themselves to teach; at the same time requesting Charles to give his reasons for sometimes differing from himself and all his brethren. This challenge it does not appear that Charles ever accepted. The subject was with him rather a matter of feeling than of logical deduction.

The peculiarity of his mind, to which reference has just been made, was especially manifest in regard of ecclesiastical affairs. In early life he received from his brother Samuel a deep impression that Bishops are, by the appointment of God, an order superior to Presbyters; and that the imposition of their hands in ordination is absolutely necessary to convey the true ministerial character. To those only who were episcopally ordained would he concede the right to execute what he called “the Priest’s office,” by consecrating the sacramental elements, and administering them to the people. Yet [while he invested the episcopal Clergy with such high and sacred prerogatives, he censured not a few of them with appalling severity. He characterized many of them as the mere “servants of the State,” who had never been called of God to minister in holy things.

In nothing was the peculiarity of Mr. Charles Wesley’s mind more apparent than in his thinkings and feelings with reference to the established Church. The strength of his affection for her is undeniable. At any period would he, without hesitation, have laid down his life rather than inten-

tionally abandon her communion, or injure her spiritual interests. A fear lest the Methodists should forsake her, was beyond comparison the greatest trouble of his life; and to the last he cherished a hope that some Bishop would be raised up, who would ordain the Methodist Preachers generally, and thus formally admit them to a ministry to which he believed them to be called of God. To this he looked, as the consummation of his desires and hopes upon earth. As to himself, he often declared, that, were he to forsake the Church of England, he durst not meet the disembodied spirit of his father in paradise. Yet it has been shown that for many years his Churchmanship consisted in the bare use of the Liturgy; for he was under none of the Church's authorities; and by preaching in Church hours, and administering the Lord's supper in the Methodist chapels, he contributed, more than any other man whatever, to create among the societies generally a desire for the same order, and thus prepared the way for the independent position which Methodism has since assumed, although nothing could be farther from his thoughts and purpose.

There is also reason to believe that he was the first to administer the Lord's supper in a Methodist place of worship; and that he thus acted without his brother's concurrence, or even knowledge. At an early period of their irregular labours Mr. John Wesley had a conversation with the Bishop of Bristol, in which his Lordship expressed his displeasure at having heard that the brothers administered the holy communion to their societies separately. Mr. Wesley answered, that they had never done this; and he believed they never should.* Such were his views at the time. A few months after this conversation, one of the Bristol Clergy drove Mr. Charles Wesley away from the Lord's table, with several converted colliers, who had accompanied him to receive the memorials of their Redeemer's passion. He then took these poor despised men to the humble school-house which had just been erected for the benefit of their children, in Kingswood, and there administered to them the sacred elements; thus introducing, on his own responsibility, the practice of separate communion. In

* Works, vol. xiii., p. 466.

theory he was the most rigid and unbending Churchman in the Methodist body; but in his own practice he was decidedly the most liberal of all his contemporaries. The reason is, that he was guided, in matters of this nature, rather by his feelings than by calm and dispassionate reasoning. He spurned with indignation the very thought of Methodistical independency, while, with the most perfect and undeniable sincerity, he acted upon principles which led to its general adoption.

With all his love of the Church, and admiration of Episcopacy, he was as decided as his brother in the approval of lay-preaching; and when occasion served, he was equally fearless in avowing his opinions on the subject. He once met with Dr. Robinson, the Primate of Ireland, at the Bristol Hotwells. They had been friends together at college. The following conversation took place between them, as they paced to and fro, and referred to their former history. It displays to great advantage Charles's honesty, and readiness of thought.

PRIMATE.—“I knew your brother well. I could never credit all that I have heard respecting him and you. But one thing in your conduct I could never account for,—your employing laymen.”

CHARLES WESLEY.—“My Lord, it is your fault.”

P.—“My fault, Mr. Wesley!”

C. W.—“Yes, my Lord; yours and your brethren's.”

P.—“How so, Sir?”

C. W.—“Why, you hold your peace, and the stones cry out.”

P.—“Well, but I am told they are unlearned men.”

C. W.—“Some of them are in many respects unlearned: so the dumb ass rebukes the Prophet.”

After this his Grace dropped the subject.

Mr. Charles Wesley remarked, in one of his private letters, that the difference between him and his brother was this,—that his brother's maxim was, “First the Methodists, then the Church;” whereas his was, “First the Church, then the Methodists;” and that this difference arose from the peculiarity of their natural temperament. “My brother,” said he, “is all hope; I am all fear.” There is much truth in this statement; but it does not exhibit the whole truth of the case. So far as theory and the habit of thought produced by education were concerned, Charles did unquestionably prefer the Church to the Methodists; but his heart clave to the Method-

ists with a deeper passion than the Church ever commanded. He chose Methodism and poverty, in preference to strict Churchmanship and wealth : a significant expression of his real character. A competent authority has stated, that a living of the value of five hundred pounds a year was offered to him,* which he respectfully declined, resolving rather to serve the Methodist congregations, with a scanty income, than accept preferment, and tear himself away from his old friends with whom he expected to spend a blessed immortality. Many of the Methodists were his spiritual children ; and among them he had from the beginning enjoyed the true communion of saints. He saw in them a deep and extensive work of God, in the benefits of which he himself largely participated ; and neither the offer of worldly advancement, nor the tendency to separation from the Church which he witnessed and lamented, could ever induce him to withdraw from their community. With them he chose to live and die. “ Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

It is indeed difficult to conceive how Mr. Charles Wesley could have confined himself strictly to the rubric of the Church in the celebration of divine worship. No man loved the Liturgy more than he did, or was better able to appreciate the beauties of that incomparable form of sound words ; but he could not be restrained from giving expression to his feelings in extemporary prayer, appropriate hymns, and exhortation, especially when administering the Lord's supper. In the Methodist societies and congregations he found the people always ready to sympathize with him in those deep and solemn feelings of holy joy and desire, to which he was accustomed to give utterance, and which indeed were often irrepressible. To an exactly measured and mechanical round of duty, a mind like his could not adapt itself, but with exquisite pain. Freedom of thought and expression was essential to his happiness. In the breast of such a man the fire must, occasionally at least, break forth in all its brightness, and the intensity of its heat. On some occasions he occupied two or three hours in administering the Lord's supper to the Methodist societies in London ; and yet, even then, he and his fellow-communicants knew not how to

* Moore's Life of Wesley, vol. ii., p. 372.

part ; so rich and abundant was the influence from above which rested upon them.

The very efficient itinerant ministry which he long exercised, and which it pleased God to crown with abundant success, must for ever endear his memory to the Methodist societies, both in Great Britain and Ireland. But for his unwearied labours the work could not have been extended so widely as it was ; for several of the societies were formed by him, and others greatly enlarged. When he ceased to travel, his ministry was connected with much self-denial. He did not live in ease, and in the bosom of his family. For nearly fifteen years it is probable that he spent at least one half of his time in London, while his wife and children were in Bristol ; and he often saw them not for even two or three months together. Such was the conscientiousness with which he fulfilled his pastoral duties, that he remained with his flock, when their spiritual necessities required his presence, in seasons of severe domestic affliction. He was repeatedly absent from home when his children sickened and died, and his beloved wife greatly needed his counsel and sympathy. To such a husband and father, this was no light sacrifice. But he had learned to “endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ ;” and his habits, through life, partook of the severity which he and his brother practised when they left the quiet and learned retirement of Oxford for an American wilderness.

It is as a writer of devotional poetry, that Mr. Charles Wesley will be permanently remembered, and that his name will live in the annals of the church. In the composition of hymns, adapted to Christian worship, he certainly has no equal in the English language, and is perhaps superior to every other uninspired man that ever lived. It does not appear that any person besides himself, in any section of the universal church, has either written so many hymns, or hymns of such surpassing excellence. Those which he published would occupy about ten ordinary-sized duodecimo volumes ; and the rest which he left in manuscript, and evidently designed for publication, would occupy at least ten more. It would be absurd to suppose that all these are of equal value ; but, generally speaking, those of them which possess the least merit bear the impress of his genius.

It is doubtful whether any man has written the English language with greater purity and strength than Mr. Charles Wesley. He introduces words derived from the Greek, Latin, and French languages, when they are necessary, because of the metre, or the rhyme, and to give a greater variety to his diction; otherwise he almost always uses words of Saxon origin, the force and beauty of which are universally felt. An opinion has prevailed that several of his hymns were greatly improved by his brother, who gave them an elegance and polish which they did not originally possess. But this is true only to a very limited extent. Mr. John Wesley shortened many of his brother's hymns, when he inserted them in his general collection; in some instances he joined two or three short ones together; such allusions as were strictly personal and local he expunged, so as to adapt the stanzas in which they occurred to general use; but in other respects the alterations which he introduced into Charles's compositions were very few. The correctness of Mr. John Wesley's taste will not be disputed; and in logical clearness and arrangement he had few equals; but even in prose, while he excelled most men in simplicity and strength, Charles rivalled him in terseness, and surpassed him in spirit. Both in prose and verse Charles's words and idioms are thoroughly English. Nor did John's taste in poetry always come up to Charles's standard. In his copy of the *Arminian Magazine* he has animadverted upon some pieces which John admired, and therefore inserted in that publication.

To Mr. Charles Wesley it was a great advantage, that he was so well trained in classical learning. Had he not been a sound scholar, he could never have fully exercised his high vocation as a devotional poet, and the church would not have derived the full benefits of his genius. Being familiar with the great poets of antiquity, he had a perfect knowledge of the laws of versification. While he possessed the true poetic spirit, he thoroughly understood "the art of poetry;" so that his compositions are not only free from the literary blemishes and defects which disfigure the works of many less-instructed writers, but in their numbers and general structure invariably display the hand of a master. Of him, as well as of an elder poet, it might be justly said, that he no sooner began to write, whether "prosing or versing," than it was

apparent that "the style by certain vital signs it had was likely to live." This the intelligent Vicar of Shoreham at once perceived and declared.

The ease and freedom with which he wrote are very apparent. His brother has remarked that whenever he detected a stiff sentence in any of his own prose writings, he expunged it instantly, deeming stiffness in an author an unpardonable offence against good taste. Charles manifestly cherished the same feeling with regard to verse. It cannot be said of him, as Dr. Johnson said of Prior, that the words which he selects to express his meaning are reluctantly "forced" into the situations which they occupy, and "do their duty sullenly." They rather appear formed for the exact service which is assigned them; and seldom can one of them be either dispensed with or transposed without impairing the beauty or the sense. Many of his stanzas are as elegantly free in their construction as even the finest paragraphs of Addison's prose. While his sentiments and language are admired by the most competent judges of good writing, his hymns are perfectly intelligible to the common people; thousands of whom, possessed of spiritual religion, feel their truth and power, and sing them with rapturous delight. His metres are very numerous, perhaps more so than those of any other English writer whatever; and it is difficult to say in which of them he most excelled. There are twenty-six metres in the Wesleyan Collection in general use; and several others occur in the volumes which Charles published in his own name. This variety renders the reading of his books exceedingly agreeable. His cadences never pall on the ear, and never weary the attention. Like scenes in nature, and the best musical compositions, they are perpetually varying, and charm by their novelty.

As his object in writing was not the establishment of his own reputation, but the advancement of Christian piety, by fanning the flame of devotion, he was not so solicitous for the originality of his thoughts, as for their truth and importance. Occasionally, therefore, he did not hesitate to borrow a thought from other men, and cast it into his own mould; and while he proposed it in his own incomparable diction, he never failed to expand and improve it. He did not borrow the thoughts of other men, because he was himself destitute

of the inventive faculty ; for his hymns which are perfectly original are far more numerous, and embrace a wider range of subjects, than those of any other writer in the English language. His object in composition was first his own edification, and then the edification of the church ; and he was ready to press into his service whatever was likely to advance these holy designs.

Two examples of the manner in which he occasionally availed himself of the writings of other men are subjoined. The first is taken from Dr. Brevint's "Christian Sacrifice ;" the other from the "Night Thoughts" of Dr. Young : a work to which Mr. Charles Wesley was especially partial.

"This Victim having been offered up in the fulness of times, and in the midst of the world, which is Christ's great temple, and having been thence carried up to heaven, which is his sanctuary ; from thence spread salvation all around, as the burnt-offering did its smoke. And thus his body and blood have everywhere, but especially at this sacrament, a true and real presence. When He offered himself upon earth, the vapour of his atonement went, and darkened the very sun : and by rending the great veil, it clearly showed He had made a way into heaven. And since He is gone up, He sends down to earth the graces that spring continually both from his everlasting sacrifice, and from the continual intercession that attends it. So that we need not say, 'Who will go up into heaven ?' since without either ascending or descending, this sacred body of Jesus fills with atonement and blessings the remotest parts of his temple."

These impressive sentiments are thus versified by our Christian poet :—

Victim divine, thy grace we claim,
While thus thy precious death we show ;
Once offer'd up a spotless Lamb,
In thy great temple here below,
Thou didst for all mankind atone,
And standest now before the throne.

Thou standest in the holiest place,
As now for guilty sinners slain,
The blood of sprinkling speaks, and prays
All prevalent for helpless man ;
Thy blood is still our ransom found,
And speaks salvation all around.

The smoke of thy atonement here
 Darken'd the sun, and rent the veil,
 Made the new way to heaven appear,
 And show'd the great Invisible :
 Well pleased in thee, our God look'd down,
 And call'd his rebels to a crown.

He still respects thy sacrifice,
 Its savour sweet doth always please ;
 The offering smokes through earth and skies,
 Diffusing life, and joy, and peace :
 To these thy lower courts it comes,
 And fills them with divine perfumes.

We need not now go up to heaven,
 To bring the long-sought Saviour down ;
 Thou art to all already given,
 Thou dost even now thy banquet crown,
 To every faithful soul appear,
 And show thy real presence here.

The very just and striking sentiments contained in the “Night Thoughts,” often proposed with great abruptness and force, were exactly suited to Mr. Charles Wesley’s peculiar temper and mental habits. He therefore esteemed this book next to the holy Scriptures. Yet could he, when occasion served, surpass Young himself in living energy both of thought and expression, as the following example demonstrates. The author of the “Night Thoughts” exclaims,—

“Of man *immortal* ! hear the lofty style :
 If so decreed, the’ Almighty Will be done.
 Let earth dissolve, yon pond’rous orbs descend,
 And grind us into dust. The *soul* is safe ;
 The *man* emerges ; mounts above the wreck,
 As tow’ring flame from *nature’s* funeral pyre ;
 O’er devastation, as a gainer, smiles ;
 His charter, his inviolable rights,
 Well-pleased to learn from thunder’s impotence,
 Death’s pointless darts, and hell’s defeated storms.”

Mr. Charles Wesley, taking up the theme, thus sings in still loftier strains, and with a greater power of expression :—

Stand the’ omnipotent decree !
 Jehovah’s will be done !
 Nature’s end we wait to see,
 And hear her final groan :

Let this earth dissolve, and blend
 In death the wicked and the just,
 Let those pond'rous orbs descend,
 And grind us into dust !

Rests secure the righteous man !
 At his Redeemer's beck
 Sure to' emerge, and rise again,
 And mount above the wreck.
 Lo ! the heavenly spirit towers,
 Like flames o'er nature's funeral pyre,
 Triumphs in immortal powers,
 And claps his wings of fire !

Nothing hath the just to lose
 By worlds on worlds destroy'd ;
 Far beneath his feet he views,
 With smiles, the flaming void ;
 Sees this universe renew'd,
 The grand millennial reign begun,
 Shouts with all the sons of God
 Around the' eternal throne !

Resting in this glorious hope
 To be at last restored,
 Yield we now our bodies up
 To earthquake, plague, or sword :
 Listening for the call divine,
 The latest trumpet of the seven ;
 Soon our soul and dust shall join,
 And both fly up to heaven.

These and many other selections from the poetry of Mr. Charles Wesley must strike every one as examples of the true sublime. His was the genuine lyrical spirit, sanctified and invigorated by the Holy Ghost, expressing itself in gushes and sudden bursts of feeling, ascending at once to the loftiest eminence apparently without an effort. He aimed at "no middle flight," but at a direct ascent to the heaven of heavens. There he beheld the THREE-ONE God, as the endless portion of his people. Seeing time and created nature in all their insignificance, and anticipating the consummation of all things, he bursts forth in a strain more than human,—

Vanish then this world of shadows !
 Pass the former things away !
 Lord, appear, appear to glad us
 With the dawn of endless day :

O conclude this mortal story !
 Throw this universe aside !
 Come, eternal King of glory,
 Now descend and take thy bride !

He concludes one of his hymns for Whitsunday with a stanza of like sublimity, and of great sweetness. Having described the work of the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of the heart, so that the happy subjects of his influence can sing,—

So shall we pray, and never cease,
 So shall we thankfully confess
 Thy wisdom, truth, and power, and love ;
 With joy unspeakable adore,
 And bless and praise thee evermore,
 And serve thee as thy hosts above ;—

the poet teaches them thus to continue the hallowed song :—

Till added to that heavenly choir,
 We raise our songs of triumph higher,
 And praise thee in a bolder strain ;
 Outsoar the first-born seraph's flight,
 And sing, with all our friends in light,
 Thy everlasting love to man.

One of the most striking peculiarities of Mr. Charles Wesley's poetry is its energy. He always writes with vigour, for he is always in earnest. As he felt deeply, and had a singular command of language, he expresses himself with great force. Never does he weaken his lines by unnecessary epithets, or any redundancy of words ; and he evidently aimed more at strength than smoothness. Yet he had too fine an ear ever to be rugged ; and whenever he chose, he could rival the most tuneful of his brethren in the liquid softness of his numbers. Many of his hymns prove this. As an example, the whole of that which is numbered 143 in the Wesleyan Collection may be confidently adduced :—

Jesu, lover of my soul,
 Let me to thy bosom fly,
 While the nearer waters roll,
 While the tempest still is high :

Hide me, O my Saviour, hide,
 Till the storm of life be past ;
 Safe into the haven guide ;
 O receive my soul at last !

Nor is the hymn numbered 228 less smooth and flowing in its versification. It begins,—

Thou Shepherd of Israel, and mine,
 The joy and desire of my heart,
 For closer communion I pine,
 I long to reside where thou art :
 The pasture I languish to find,
 Where all who their Shepherd obey,
 Are fed, on thy bosom reclined,
 And screen'd from the heat of the day.

But the crowning excellence of his hymns is the spirit of deep and fervent piety which they everywhere breathe.

In the range of their subjects they embrace the entire system of revealed truth, both doctrinal and practical, with the principal facts of Scripture history ; and apply the whole of them to purposes of personal godliness. The perfections of the divine nature ; the care and bounty of God's universal providence ; the glory of Christ, as the everlasting Son of the Father, the almighty Creator and Preserver of all things ; his incarnation, spotless example, miracles, personal ministry, atonement, resurrection, ascension to heaven, intercession, saving power, faithfulness, mercy, mediatorial government ; the Godhead of the Holy Spirit, and his work in the entire process of human salvation ; the connexion of his operations with the mediation and glory of Christ ; the Christian salvation, comprehending the preventing grace of God, giving repentance unto life, justification before God, the inward witness of adoption, the regeneration of the heart, progressive sanctification, the full renewal of the soul in the image of God, the perfect love of God and man ; the Christian sacraments ; the duties of Christianity, in all the relations of life ; the happiness of the separate spirits of the just ; the resurrection of the dead ; the dissolution of the universe ; the general judgment ; the final perdition of ungodly men ; the everlasting felicity of the righteous, in the enjoyment of God : these, with a thousand other topics connected with them, constitute

the subjects of his incomparable poetry. All these he has illustrated with a diction of unrivalled purity, strength, and beauty, and formed into addresses to God, in adoration, confession, prayer, deprecation, thanksgiving, and praise. Every feeling of the heart, from the first communication of light to the understanding, producing conviction of sin, and desires after God and Christ, till salvation from sin is attained, the conflicts of the spiritual warfare are ended, and the sanctified believer enters into the heavenly paradise, is embodied in his hymns. The sorrows of penitence, the confidence of faith, the joys of pardon, holiness, and hope, the burning ardour of divine love, the pleasures of obedience, the warmth of universal benevolence, and the anticipations of future glory, he has not merely *described*, but *expressed*, and that in all their fulness and depth.

The poetry of this very eminent man is thoroughly evangelical. It is humiliating to see in the Collections of Hymns used by Arian and Socinian congregations, many which bear the names of orthodox divines. They relate mostly to the works and providence of God, and other subjects of a collateral kind, without any reference to the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the atonement for sin made by the death of Christ, justification through faith in his blood, and the influence of the Holy Ghost, as one of the benefits of Christ's mediation. Whereas these glorious peculiarities of the evangelical revelation constitute the very substance of Charles Wesley's verse. They cannot be expunged by a slight alteration in the phraseology. If these verities are excluded, the hymns in general are destroyed; and hence his compositions, notwithstanding their high and undeniable poetical merit, are seldom found in the devotional books of heterodox worshippers. From the day in which he found rest to his soul, by faith in the blood of Christ, and entered upon his glorious career as a devotional poet, he might justly say,—

“Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth; and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin!”

An opinion has been advanced, that his genius appears to the greatest advantage in his “Hymns for Families,” where he

has invested the ordinary affairs of life with sacredness and dignity, and expressed in true poetic language the anxieties, joys, and sorrows which arise out of the domestic relations. But if the writer of this narrative might be allowed to avow a preference, where all is excellent, he would specify the funeral hymns, including, not only those which were published under that name, but all that were written on occasion of the deaths of pious individuals to whom the poet was personally known. These would, if collected, form an ample volume; and their sentiments and diction are beyond all praise. They are throughout characterized by a tenderness of affection, a meek submission to the will of God, a warmth of Christian friendship, and a triumphant hope arising out of the truths of the Gospel, which place them decidedly at the head of all similar compositions in the English language. Notwithstanding the sameness of the occasions which called them forth, they present an astonishing variety of thought and phraseology; and exhibit such a view of the power of Christianity to cheer and sustain in the prospect of dissolution, as involuntarily to extort the exclamation, "Let me die the death of the righteous; and let my last end be like his!"

The poetical talent that was committed to the trust of Mr. Charles Wesley involved a responsibility, the full extent of which it would be impossible to estimate. He was endued with a power which scarcely any other man has been called to wield: a power of promoting the spiritual benefit, not only of the multitudes whom his living voice could reach, but of millions whom he never saw. During the last fifty years few Collections of Hymns, designed for the use of evangelical congregations, whether belonging to the established Church, or to the Dissenting bodies, have been made without a considerable number of his compositions, which are admired in proportion as the people are spiritually minded. His hymns are therefore extensively used in secret devotion, in family worship, and in public religious assemblies. Every Sabbath-day myriads of voices are lifted up, and utter, in the hallowed strains which he has supplied, the feelings of penitence, of faith, of grateful love, and joyous hope, with which the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of life, has inspired them; and are thus in a course of training for the more perfect worship of

heaven. Faithfully did he consecrate his talent to the Lord; and the honour which the Lord has conferred upon his servant is of the highest order: an honour widely extended, and increasing with every successive generation. As long as the language in which they are written is understood, and enlightened piety is cherished, the hymns of this venerable man will be used as a handmaid to devotion. They were not “obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her siren sisters, but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to purify the lips of whom He pleases.” They are perfectly free from all sickly sentimentality, especially that which some modern poets affect, by a perpetual reference to consecrated places, sacred vestments, holy water, and the trumpery of papal Rome; as if religion were a mere matter of the imagination, and Christians were still under the Jewish law. His hymns are as rational and manly in sentiment, as they are pure and elegant in composition. Their theology is thoroughly scriptural.

To the Wesleyan societies and congregations, wherever situated, especially in Great Britain and America, these hymns are of inestimable value, and exert an influence which is only exceeded by that of the holy Scriptures. No other hymns in the English language so fully exhibit those just views of apostolical Christianity which the author and his brother were a means of reviving. All that these men of God taught in the pulpit, and thousands of their spiritual children have experienced, the hymns adequately express. They assume that it is the common privilege of believers to enjoy the direct and abiding witness of their personal adoption; to be made free from sin by the sanctifying Spirit; to live and die in the conscious possession of that perfect love which casteth out fear; and they express a strong and irrepressible desire for these blessings, with the mighty faith by which they are obtained. Thus he teaches the mourning penitent to pray for pardon, and the peace of God which attends it:—

O that I could the blessing prove,
 My heart's extreme desire!
 Live happy in my Saviour's love,
 And in his arms expire!

In answer to ten thousand prayers,
 Thou pard'ning God, descend !
 Number me with salvation's heirs,
 My sins and troubles end !

Nothing I ask, or want beside,
 Of all in earth or heaven,
 But let me feel thy blood applied,
 And live and die forgiven !

In reference to the higher blessing of entire sanctification, he thus sings :—

Where the indubitable seal
 That ascertains the kingdom mine ?
 The powerful stamp I long to feel,
 The signature of love divine !
 O shed it in my heart abroad !
 Fulness of love, of heaven, of God !

No man ever excelled him in expressing the power of faith:—

The thing surpasses all my thought,
 But faithful is my Lord ;
 Through unbelief I stagger not,
 For GOD hath spoke the word.

Faith, mighty faith, the PROMISE sees,
 And looks to THAT ALONE,
 Laughs at impossibilities,
 And cries, “ It shall be done ! ”

My flesh, which cries, “ It cannot be,”
 Shall silence keep before the Lord ;
 And earth, and hell, and sin shall flee
 At Jesu's everlasting word.

Great praise is due to the excellent Dr. Watts for the hymns with which he favoured the churches. Many of them are exceedingly beautiful and devotional. He had the honour, too, of taking the lead in this most important service ; being the first of our poets that successfully applied his talents to such lyrical compositions as are adapted to the use and edification of Christian assemblies. But in the vehement language of the heart, in power of expression, in the variety

of his metres, and in the general structure of his verse, he is not equal to Charles Wesley, any more than in richness of evangelical sentiment, and in deep religious experience. The Doctor teaches Christians to sing, with mixed emotions of desire, hope, and doubt,

*“ Could we but climb where Moses stood,
And view the landscape o’er,
Not Jordan’s streams, nor death’s cold flood,
Should fright us from the shore.”*

Whereas Charles Wesley has attained the desired eminence, and thence triumphantly exclaims,

The promised land, from Pisgah’s top,
I now exult to see!
My hope is full (O glorious hope!)
Of immortality.

It was no hyperbole, but a sober truth, which the pious Fletcher uttered when he said, “One of the greatest blessings that God has bestowed upon the Methodists, next to the Bible, is their Collection of Hymns.”

The special providence of God is strikingly seen in raising up John and Charles Wesley as the chief instruments of the revival of religion to which the name of Methodism has been given. They were one in mind and heart; both were highly gifted, and have been a means of conferring the most substantial benefits upon the grateful people who have entered into their labours: yet their endowments and services were vastly dissimilar; and their work would have been seriously defective had either of them been wanting. John was a means, under God, of giving the Methodists their theology and discipline; yet, with these mighty advantages, what could they do without the hymns of Charles? How could they give adequate expression to the feelings of their hearts in their various religious services, if this “sweet singer” had never lived, or had directed his genius for poetry to other objects? An eminent man is reported to have said, “Let who may legislate for any people; only let me compose the ballads which they sing, and I will form their character.” It is doubtful whether any human agency whatever has contributed more directly to form the character of the Methodist

societies than the hymns of Charles Wesley, which they are constantly in the habit of singing, and with which their memories are therefore richly charged. The sermons of the Preachers, the instructions of the Class-Leaders, the prayers of the people, both in their families and social meetings, are all tinged with the sentiments and phraseology of his hymns. In his beautiful and expressive lines many of them are accustomed to give utterance to their desires and hopes, their sorrows and fears, their confidence and joy ; and in innumerable instances they have expired with his verses upon their lips. Multitudes of them have died, whispering in faint accents, but with holy joy and hope,—

My Jesus to know,
And feel his blood flow,
'Tis life everlasting, 'tis heaven below.

What is there here to court my stay,
And keep me back from home,
While angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come ?

They have found his hymns and spiritual songs to breathe the very language of heaven ; and they have only exchanged them for the song of Moses and of the Lamb.

It is an important fact, that this gifted man, apparently without design, has anticipated all the wants of the Wesleyan Connexion, with respect to devotional poetry. He has supplied it with hymns adapted to every religious service, even Missionary Meetings, which were unknown in his time, and (strange as it may seem !) even the ordination of Ministers. He did indeed speak to the people in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, to their edification and comfort. In every place, and at all times, he “ had a hymn, had a psalm,” suited to the occasion ; for he was

“ Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce.”

At funerals, at weddings, in the domestic circle, in the public congregation, at the table of the Lord, he was prepared to lead the devotions of those around him. When attended by immense multitudes in the open air, and under the wide

canopy of heaven, he called upon them to sing with heart and voice,—

Ye mountains and vales, in praises abound ;
 Ye hills and ye dales, continue the sound :
 Break forth into singing, ye trees of the wood,
 For Jesus is bringing lost sinners to God.

Atonement He made for every one ;
 The debt He hath paid, the work He hath done :
 Shout all the creation, below and above,
 Ascribing salvation to Jesus's love.

When assembled with his Christian friends in a tea-party, he attempted to stir up their pure minds, by calling upon them to join in this lively and joyous strain :—

How pleasant and sweet,
 In his name when we meet,
 Is his food to our spiritual taste !
 We are banqueting here
 On angelical cheer,
 And on joys that eternally last.

Invited by Him,
 We drink of the stream
 Ever flowing in bliss from the throne ;
 Who in Jesus believe,
 We the Spirit receive
 That proceeds from the Father and Son.

Come, Lord, from the skies,
 And command us to rise,
 Ready made for the mansions above ;
 With our Head to ascend,
 And eternity spend
 In a rapture of heavenly love.

Walking abroad in the country,

“ Smit with the love of sacred song,”

he thus bursts forth :—

Along the hill or dewy mead
 In sweet forgetfulness I tread,
 Or wander through the grove ;
 As Adam in his native seat,
 In all His works my God I meet,
 The object of my love.

I see his beauty in the flower ;
To shade my walks, and deck my bower,
His love and wisdom join ;
Him in the feather'd quire I hear,
And own, while all my soul is ear,
The music is divine.

In yon unbounded plain I see
A sketch of His immensity,
Who spans these ample skies,
Whose presence makes the happy place,
And opens in the wilderness
A blooming paradise.

O would He now himself impart,
And fix the Eden in my heart,
The sense of sin forgiven !
How should I then throw off my load,
And walk delightfully with God,
And follow Christ to heaven !

On the return of his wife's birth-day, he invited her to join in the holy and joyous strain :—

Come away to the skies,
My beloved, arise,
And rejoice on the day thou wast born ;
On the festival day
Come exulting away,
To thy heavenly country return.

We have laid up our love
And treasure above,
Though our bodies continue below ;
The redeem'd of the Lord,
We remember his word,
And with singing to Sion we go.

With thanks we approve
The design of the love,
Which hath join'd us in Jesus's name,
So united in heart,
That we never can part,
Till we meet at the feast of the Lamb.

There, there at his feet
We shall suddenly meet,
And be parted in body no more ;
We shall sing to our lyres,
With the heavenly quires,
And our Saviour in glory adore.

Hallelujah we sing
 To our Father and King,
 And his rapturous praises repeat ;
 To the Lamb that was slain
 Hallelujah again,
 Sing all heaven, and fall at his feet !

In assurance of hope
 We to Jesus look up,
 Till his banner unfurl'd in the air
 From our graves we both see,
 And cry out, IT IS HE ;
 And fly up to acknowledge Him there !

It may truly be said of him, as of the heavenly minstrels, that his "harp" was "ever tuned ;" and that whenever he

"Introduced
 His sacred song, he waken'd raptures high."

In every object of nature, in every event of life, and especially in the gracious provisions of the Gospel, he saw the hand and heart of God ;

"Then into hymns
 Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved."

His heart overflowed with sacred verse till it ceased to beat ; and his tuneful voice was never silent till it was silenced in death. He is gone ; but the imperishable fruit of his sanctified genius remains, as one of the richest legacies ever bequeathed to the church by her faithful sons. As to himself, he still lives in the region of holy music and holy love ; and there sings

"Before the sapphire-colour'd throne
 To Him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee,
 Where the bright seraphim, in burning row,
 Their loud, uplifted angel-trumpets blow ;
 And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly."

APPENDIX.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

BURNING OF THE PARSONAGE HOUSE AT EPWORTH.

VOL. I.—PAGE 1.

MR. CHARLES WESLEY was somewhat more than thirteen months old when the parsonage-house at Epworth was burned down the second time. The following is Mrs. Wesley's account of this calamity, in a letter to a Clergyman in the neighbourhood :—

“ Epworth, August 24th, 1709. On Wednesday night, February 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, some sparks fell from the roof of our house, upon one of the children's (Hetty's) feet. She immediately ran to our chamber, and called us. Mr. Wesley, hearing a cry of ‘ Fire ’ in the street, started up ; (as I was very ill, he lay in a separate room from me ;) and, opening his door, found the fire was in his own house. He immediately came to my room, and bid me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly, and shift for ourselves. Then he ran and burst open the nursery-door, and called to the maid, to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her ; the three others, in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bid the rest follow ; which the three elder did. When we were got into the hall, and were surrounded with flames, Mr. Wesley found he had left the keys of the doors above-stairs. He ran up and recovered them, a minute before the staircase took fire. When we opened the street-door, the strong north-east wind drove the flames in with such violence that none could stand against them. But some of our children got out through the windows, the rest through a little door into the garden. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows, neither could I get to the garden-door. I endeavoured three times to force my passage through the street-door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress I besought our blessed Saviour for help, and then waded through the fire, naked as I was ; which

did me no farther harm than a little scorching my hands and my face.

“When Mr. Wesley had seen the other children safe, he heard the child in the nursery cry. He attempted to go up the stairs; but they were all on fire, and would not bear his weight. Finding it impossible to give any help, he kneeled down in the hall, and recommended the soul of the child to God.”

To this account Mr. John Wesley added the following note:—

“I believe it was just at that time I waked; for I did not cry, as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains, and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed up on a chest, which stood near the window: one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, ‘There will not be time; but I have thought of another expedient. Here, I will fix myself against the wall: lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders.’ They did so, and he took me out of the window. Just then the whole roof fell in; but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house where my father was, he cried out, ‘Come, neighbours, let us kneel down! Let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go; I am rich enough!’

“The next day, as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his Polyglot Bible, on which just those words were legible: *Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem, et sequere me.* ‘Go; sell all that thou hast; and take up thy cross, and follow me.’”

The most striking description of this terrible calamity is given in the subjoined letter from the Rector of Epworth to his friend, the Duke of Buckingham. We believe it was never before published.

“Righteous is the Lord, and just in all his judgments! I am grieved that I must write what will, I doubt, afflict your Grace, concerning your still unfortunate servant. I think I am enough recollected to give a tolerable account of it.

“On Wednesday last, at half an hour after eleven at night, in a quarter of an hour’s time, or less, my house at Epworth was burnt down to the ground: I hope by accident; but God knows all. We had been brewing; but done all, every spark of fire quenched before five o’clock that evening, at least six hours before the house

was on fire. Perhaps the chimney above might take fire, (though it had been swept not long since,) and break through into the thatch. Yet it is strange I should neither see nor smell anything of it, having been in my study in that part of the house till above half an hour after ten. Then I locked the doors of that part of the house, where my wheat and other corn lay, which was threshed, and went to bed.

“The servants had not been in bed a quarter of an hour when the fire began. My wife being near her time, and very weak, I lay in the next chamber. A little after eleven I heard ‘Fire’ cried in the street, next to which I lay. If I had been in our own chamber, as usual, we had all been lost. I threw myself out of bed, got on my waistcoat and night-gown, and looked out of the window; saw the reflection of the flame, but knew not where it was; ran to my wife’s chamber with one stocking on, and my breeches in my hand; would have broken open the door, which was bolted within, but could not. My two eldest children were with her. They rose, and ran towards the staircase, to raise the rest of the house. There I saw it was my own house, all in a light blaze, and nothing but a door between the flame and the staircase.

“I ran back to my wife, who by this time had got out of bed naked, and opened the door. I bade her fly for her life. We had a little silver, and some gold; about £20. She would have stayed for it; but I pushed her out; got her and my two eldest children down stairs, (where two of the servants were now got,) and asked for the keys. They knew nothing of them. I ran up stairs, and found them; came down, and opened the street-door. The thatch was fallen off, all on fire. The north-east wind drove all the sheets of flame in my face, as if reverberated in a lamp. I got twice on the steps, and was drove down again. I ran to the garden-door, and opened it. The fire was there more moderate. I bade them all follow, but found only two with me, and the maid with another* in her arms that cannot go; but all naked. I ran with them to my house of office in the garden, out of the reach of the flames; put the least in the other’s lap; and not finding my wife follow me, ran back into the house to seek her, but could not find her. The servants and two of the children were got out at the window. In the kitchen I found my eldest daughter naked, and asked her for her mother. She could not tell where she was. I took her up, and carried her to the rest in the garden; came in the second time, and ran up stairs, the flame breaking through the wall at the staircase; thought all my children were safe, and hoped my wife was

* This must have been Charles.

some way got out. I then remembered my books, and felt in my pocket for the key of the chamber which led to my study. I could not find the key, though I searched a second time. Had I opened that door, I must have perished.

“I ran down, and went to my children in the garden, to help them over the wall. When I was without, I heard one of my poor lambs left still above-stairs, about six years old, cry out dismally, ‘Help me!’ I ran in again to go up stairs; but the staircase was now all a-fire. I tried to force up through it the second time, holding my breeches over my head; but the stream of fire beat me down. I thought I had done my duty; went out of the house to that part of my family I had saved, in the garden, with the killing cry of my child still in my ears. I made them all kneel down; and we prayed God to receive his soul.

“I tried to break the pales down, and get my children over into the street, but could not: then went under the flame, and got them over the wall. Now I put on my breeches, and leaped after them. One of my maid-servants, that had brought out the least child, got out much at the same time. She was saluted with an hearty curse by one of the neighbours, and told that we had fired the house ourselves, the second time, on purpose. I ran about, inquiring for my wife, and other children; met the chief man and Chief Constable of the town, going from my house, not towards it, to help me. I took him by the hand, and said, ‘God’s will be done!’ His answer was, ‘Will you never have done your tricks? You fired your house once before. Did you not get money enough by it then, that you have done it again?’ This was cold comfort. I said, ‘God forgive you! I find you are chief Maw still.’ But I had a little better soon after, hearing that my wife was saved; and then I fell on mother earth, and blessed God.

“I went to her. She was alive, and could just speak. She thought I had perished, and so did all the rest, not having seen me, nor any share of eight children, for a quarter of an hour; and by this time all the chambers, and everything, was consumed to ashes; for the fire was stronger than a furnace, the violent wind beating it down on the house. She told me afterwards how she escaped. When I went first to open the back-door, she endeavoured to force through the fire at the fore-door, but was struck back twice to the ground. She thought to have died there, but prayed to Christ to help her. She found new strength, got up alone, and waded through two or three yards of flame, the fire on the ground being up to her knees. She had nothing on but her shoes, and a wrapping-gown, and one coat on her arm. This she wrapped about her breast, and got safe through, into the yard; but no soul

yet to help her. She never looked up, or spake, till I came : only when they brought her last child to her, bade them lay it on the bed. This was the lad whom I heard cry in the house ; but God saved him by almost a miracle. He only was forgot by the servants, in the hurry. He ran to the window towards the yard, stood upon a chair, and cried for help. There were now a few people gathered ; one of whom, who loves me, helped up another to the window. The child, seeing a man coming into the window, was frightened, and ran away, to get to his mother's chamber. He could not open the door, so ran back again. The man was fallen down from the window, and all the bed and hangings in the room where he was were blazing. They helped up the man the second time, and poor Jacky leaped into his arms, and was saved. I could not believe it till I had kissed him two or three times. My wife then said unto me, ' Are your books safe ? ' I told her, it was not much, now she and all the rest were preserved ; for we lost not one soul, though I escaped with the skin of my teeth. A little lumber was saved below-stairs, but not one rag or leaf above. We found some of the silver in a lump, which I shall send up to Mr. Hoare to sell for me.

" Mr. Smith, of Gainsborough, and others, have sent for some of my children. I have left my wife at Epworth, trembling ; but hope God will preserve her, and fear not but He will provide for us. I want nothing, having above half my barley saved in my barns, unthreshed. I had finished my alterations in the ' Life of Christ ' a little while since, and transcribed three copies of it. But all is lost. God be praised !

" I know not how to write to my poor boy * about it ; but I must, or else he will think we are all lost. Can your Grace forgive this, and all the rest ?

" I hope my wife will recover, and not miscarry, but God will give me my nineteenth child. She has burnt her legs ; but they mend. When I came to her, her lips were black. I did not know her. Some of the children are a little burnt, but not hurt, or disfigured. I only got a small blister on my hand. The neighbours send us clothes, for it is cold without them."

* His eldest son Samuel, who was then at Westminster School, and about seventeen years of age.

THE WELLESLEY FAMILY.

VOL. I.—PAGE 12.

THE following notices concerning the Wellesley family are copied from the Gentleman's Magazine for 1822, pages 325, 326. They prove the antiquity of the family, as well as its great respectability and distinction.

“A gentleman asserted to me the very late and obscure origin of the celebrated house, who now bear the name of Wellesley. I said that they were the descendants and male representatives of Sir Henry Colley, (or Cowley,) a Knight of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of whom Sir Henry Sydney, Lord Deputy of Ireland, speaks in one of his letters, 1580, addressed to his successor, Arthur Lord Grey, of Wilton, in the following words:—

““My good Lord,—I had almost forgotten to recommend to you, among other of my friends, Sir Henry Cowley, a Knight of mine own making; who, whilst he was young, and the ability and strength of his body served, was valiant, fortunate, and a good servant; and having by my appointment the charge of the King's county, kept the country well ordered, and in good obedience. He is as good a borderer as ever I found anywhere. I left him at my coming thence a Councillor; and tried him for his experience and judgment, very sufficient for the room he was called unto. He was a sound and fast friend unto me; and so I doubt not your Lordship shall find, when you shall have occasion to employ him.’

“He died 1584. His second son, another Sir Henry Colley, of Castle-Carberry, was knighted 1576; and was living 1613. He left a third Sir Henry, of Castle-Carberry, who died 1637, leaving a son and heir, Dudley Colley, of Castle-Carberry, Esq., who, dying 1674, has the following epitaph on a monument in the church of Castle-Carberry:—

““This monument was erected by Henry Colley, Esq., in memory of his father, Dudley Colley, *alias* Cowley, Esq., great-grandson of Sir Henry Colley, *alias* Cowley, of Castle-Carberry, Knight, who built this chapel and burial-place for his family, who are interred therein with their wives; Anne Warren, daughter of Henry Warren, of Grangeberg, Esq.; Elizabeth, daughter of George Sankey, of Balenrath, in the King's county, Esq.; and Catherine Cussack, daughter of Sir Thomas Cussack, Knight, Lord Justice of Ireland. Sir Henry Colley, *alias* Cowley, was knighted by Queen Elizabeth, in the second year of her reign, and made one of Her

Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council. Henry Colley, now living, son of Dudley Colley, married Mary Ussher, and had issue by her, six sons and six daughters; whereof two sons, Henry and Richard,* and six daughters are now living. She was only daughter of Sir William Ussher, of Bridgefoot, Knight, by his Lady Ursula St. Barb, and lieth here interred; for whose memory also this monument was made, 10th of July, A.D. 1705.'

"This Henry Colley, of Castle-Carberry, Esq., died 1700. His eldest son, Henry Colley, of Castle-Carberry, Esq., was M.P. for Strabane, and married Lady Mary Hamilton, third daughter of James Earl of Abercorn, but died 1723, leaving an infant son, who did not survive him a month.

"His younger brother Richard, who succeeded to the estates, and took the name of Wesley, 1727, by the will of his cousin Garret Wesley, Esq., was created Lord Mornington in 1746.

"The gentleman alluded to insisted that all this descent of the first Lord Mornington must be a fiction; for that it was notorious to numerous Irish with whom he had conversed, that the Mr. Colley, to whom the Wesley fortune and name was bequeathed, was a man of most obscure birth and station. Let the reader of the above epitaph judge what value there is in such bold and obstinate assertions!"

A LETTER TO A CURATE.

VOL. I.—PAGE 37.

THE tract is here reprinted entire, because of its extreme scarceness, the light which it throws upon the character of the venerable Rector of Epworth, and the permanent value of the advice and suggestions which it contains. The person to whom it was addressed was the brother of the Rev. Mr. Hoole, of Haxey. The preface was written by Mr. John Wesley; to whom his father says in one of his letters, "I took some pains a year or two since in drawing up some advices to Mr. Hoole's brother, then to be my Curate at Epworth, before his ordination, which may not be unuseful to you: therefore I will send them shortly to your brother Sam for you; but you must return me them again, I having no copy; and pray let none but yourself see them." The notices which the tract contains respecting many eminent persons contemporary with the author are singularly curious and interesting.

* This Richard was first Lord Mornington.

ADVICE TO A YOUNG CLERGYMAN, IN A LETTER TO HIM, CONCERNING, 1. HIS INTENTION; 2. CONVERSE AND Demeanour; 3. READING PRAYERS; 4. STUDIES; 5. PREACHING AND CATECHISING; 6. ADMINISTERING THE SACRAMENT; LASTLY, DISCIPLINE. BY A DIVINE OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THE PREFACE.

THE author of the following letter, now with God, designed it only for the use of his own assistant. But as the person with whom the original copy remained, judged it might be of service to many more, it is here presented to all those who desire faithfully to discharge the duties of their most holy function.

To them who sincerely and earnestly desire this, there needs little to be said to recommend it. Let them (after they have seriously implored God to assist them therein) first read, and then judge. They will then find strong sense and deep experience, in plain, clear, unaffected words; and a strain of piety, running through the whole, worthy a soldier of Jesus Christ.

If any ambassador of Christ, in meditating herein, shall feel the fire kindle in himself also; if he find his own heart burn within him, to promote the glory of his ever-blessed Redeemer, let him, in that acceptable time, beseech Him that he would send forth more such labourers into his harvest: and that, in particular, He would enable the publisher hereof to approve himself as the Minister of God, by spending his life in gathering the poor sheep that are scattered abroad; and, if need be, pouring out his blood for them.

DEAR BROTHER,

THE providence of God having allotted you for my assistant, you will pardon me if I assume so much as to give you a few thoughts on that occasion; because I must, in some measure, answer for you to God and his church; and you are just launching into a world wherein I have learnt some dear-bought and sad experience: especially I ought to be pretty well acquainted with my own people, among whom I have resided, with great variety of what we call fortune, for now about twenty-five years; which is longer, I think, than any, except one, has done before me since the Reformation.

I know you will hear complaints of ill enough against me among

my people : if true, as I pray God too many of them may not be, avoid my example, and be more careful ; for then all my mistakes will be your recommendations : if false, as I hope some of them may be, join with me in praying God to forgive them : (as God best knows whether I do still love them :) if anything has been worthy your imitation, emulate it, and outdo it, for which I shall most sincerely rejoice.

You must not expect a laboured discourse from me on this subject ; but be pleased to remember I write a letter, and not a tract ; and my simple thoughts, as they occur, with the same freedom and candour as I hope you will read them.

I would not willingly bind any burden upon another, which I would not touch or bear myself. I write this for myself as well as you, as far as our circumstances as Clergymen, and having the cure of souls, do agree. I do not (indeed, my friend and brother, I do not) pretend to dictate ; nor shall I require or expect anything from you but what is indispensable in your charge and character. The rest is only cordial and brotherly advice, which you are at liberty to take, or make use of better, as it offers : though I think, if any had given me the same, when I was in your circumstances, and I had followed it, I might have been somewhat more useful in the world, as well as more happy, than I either have been or now am ever like to be. As for any exact method, you must not expect it ; and, I believe, have goodness enough to excuse the want of it, which you will observe in several repetitions already : all that I shall aim at in these free and familiar hints, being to give you some aim,

I. As to your general end and intention.

II. Your converse and demeanour towards your parishioners, or others.

III. Your reading prayers.

IV. Your studies.

V. Your preaching and catechising.

VI. Your administering the sacraments, &c.

Lastly. Discipline, what we have left of it, in our presentments, excommunications, &c.

I. As to your general aims and intentions, these I well hope you have already fixed in the main, on your entrance into holy orders : and that they are no less than what the Church tells us more than once they ought to be, in her excellent form of ordination, and in her prayers at the Ember-weeks ; namely, “the glory of God, the edifying of his church, and the salvation of those immortal souls committed to your charge.” I grant a man may lawfully have somewhat of a lower secondary end in doing this ; namely, the

attaining an honest maintenance and settlement in the world : as he might have expected it, if he had turned his thoughts and studies to any other way of living. “For the labourer is worthy of his stipend ;” and our heavenly Father knoweth “that we have need of these things.” But woe to him who makes the attainment of worldly dignity or honour any part of his design herein. For he falls not far short of the iniquity of Simon Magus ; nor can he expect a much better end. And how can he answer to that solemn question, “Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost” (which I cannot tell how we should know, but by the rectitude of our intentions and designs) “to take upon you this office and ministration ? ”

Now, this end being first set right, must be constantly and regularly pursued, through the whole course of our ministry ; which will, through God’s blessing, give great vigour, comfort, and success in it : as, without this, I should think a Clergyman’s life would be one of the most tasteless and wearisome things in the world. For my own part, I had rather be a porter, or even a pettifogger.

With this view you will, I trust, often reflect seriously and deeply on the inestimable worth of those souls which God and his church have, in so solemn a manner, committed to your charge and mine ; wherein the neglect of either will not wholly excuse the other. For they are, as we then learned, “the sheep of Christ, which He bought with his death, and for whom He shed his blood : and if it should happen that any of them should take any hurt or hinderance by reason of our negligence, we know the greatness of our fault, and the horrible punishment that will ensue.” To prevent which we ought to have ■ dear love for them ; for the sick as well as the healthy, the poor as well as the rich, our enemies as well as our friends ; or else, what are we better than publicans and sinners ? And wherever we are wanting to this, we are wanting to the main of our office ; whereas this love will sweeten all our cares, and make us have the most ardent desire for their well-doing, and delight in it ; without which it must be next to impossible that we should do any considerable good amongst them : and this, one would think, could scarce fail of meeting with a suitable return of love from them ; for which we can hardly pay too dear, unless we purchase it with the loss of our innocence.

Now, I know of no method more effectual to keep these thoughts warm upon our minds, than to read over quarterly, at all the four *tempora*, the form of our ordination, especially that of Priests, to which, I hope, you will in due time be promoted, and to which many of these notices refer ; and to examine our consciences, strictly and honestly, how we have complied with those sacred and

solemn obligations ; towards which, I should think, it would be a notable help, if you would take the pains to cast the whole form, especially the Bishop's charge, and our own promises, into short questions and answers, to be ready at hand on occasion : though, on a second view, I find most of them are so already.

II. The second head was of your conversation and demeanour, as well personal as relative, towards your parishioners, or others. And this I choose to mention before your studies, before your oral preaching, or any other part of your office ; because I verily believe, that your own pious example, and prudent and religious behaviour, will conduce more to the success of your ministry than any of the others ; though you had all knowledge, though you could speak with the tongue of men and angels, though you could work the brightest miracles.

The truth is, the idea I have always formed to myself of the life and manners of a Clergyman, how we ought to behave ourselves in that most important trust, is almost as far beyond my abilities to express it, as God knows it has been beyond my own practice, which has fallen very short of it.

We meet with some expressions on this head, which are even terrible, amongst the zealous ancient Fathers. That of St. Chrysostom is very famous, and has been often quoted on this occasion. Whenever he read that to the Hebrews, "They watch for your souls, as they that must give an account," &c., (chap xiii. 17,) it shook his very soul, and he thereupon broke out into that passionate hyperbole : "It is a wonder if any ruler in the church should be saved !" Thereby intimating, as the learned and venerable Bishop Bull has observed, his deep sense and apprehension of the extreme difficulty and danger of the pastoral office.

None, surely, can look upon those questions which the Bishop proposes, both to the Priest and Deacon at their ordination, to be words of course only, but as the most weighty and important things in the world : "Will you apply all your diligence to frame and fashion your own lives, and the lives of your families, (on supposition God should entrust us with any,) according to the doctrine of Christ ; and to make yourself and them, as much as in you lies, wholesome examples to the flock of Christ, laying aside the study of the world and the flesh ?" To which we have all answered, "I will do so, the Lord being my helper ;" whose help we shall as surely have, if we call for it at all times, by humble and diligent prayer, together with our own honest care and constant endeavours, as it is impossible to have it, and unreasonable to expect it, without them. And therefore the Bishop prays, both for Priests and Deacons, in the next Collect after the Communion, "that God

would so replenish them with the truth of his doctrine, and adorn them with innocency of life, that both by word and good example they may faithfully serve in that office, to the glory of his name." And it is required, even in a Deacon, by God's Holy Spirit, "that he be of honest report, not covetous, grave, temperate, of a pure conscience, and that he be found blameless." So St. Polycarp, Epistle to the Philippians, sect. v., and St. Ignatius, in section ii. of his Epistle to the Trallians, advise the Deacons to avoid all offences as they would avoid fire.

Accordingly our seventy-fifth Canon is very strict, as were the apostolical Canons; several of which it comprises together, in requiring sober conversation in Ministers. "That, unless for their honest necessities, they resort not to any tavern or alehouse; nor give themselves to drinking or riot, or spend their time idly by day or night, in gaming, &c., always remembering they ought to excel others in purity of life, and should be examples to the people to live well and Christianly." And this, "under pain of ecclesiastical censures, to be inflicted with severity," which, though very terrible, when just, are yet comparatively but a small thing to that dreadful account which we must give for such miscarriages to our great Lord and Master, from whom may we all, in that day, find mercy!

One thing or two more I think proper to add on this head, of sober conversation. The first, that if the parish business should happen to call you to a public-house, as it sometimes may, though the more you avoid it whenever you can handsomely, I am sure the better; you will, I hope, be strictly careful not to stay long there, but to be exactly temperate; because I know you will have strong solicitations to the contrary, in both instances, from those who will be the first to ridicule and reproach you, if they can but so much as once prevail against you. The second is, that there is need of the same caution, and for the same reason, when you make a visit, or are invited, to private houses, unless it be amongst the poor, where there is little danger. The like caution can do you no harm when you are in gentlemen's houses round about you; for you can hardly miss having observed, that temperance is not the reigning virtue of the north (any more than, I am afraid, it is of the south) of England. For these and the like reasons, you will likewise keep as clear as possibly you can from receiving, or at least desiring, any considerable personal obligations; for all men are not generous, and you may hear of them again, not at all to your satisfaction, a great while after.

I do not yet know how to leave this subject, because it is of the last concern to you and me, and the success of our ministry does almost entirely depend upon it. I hardly know whether is the more fatal

error in a Clergyman, cauponizing the word of God, and smoothing over virtues and vices ; or incurring the imminent danger of damning ourselves on pretence of hope, through any criminal compliance, to save others by staying too long, and thereby running too often with them into the same excess of riot. O fly the siren Pleasure ! and the sweeter she sings, stop your ears the closer against her ; though one would think she does not sing very sweetly here ; or, however, that the charms of ale and mundungus, the top of a country parish, are not exceedingly preferable to those of temperance and innocence. To be plain, what I am most afraid of is, the goodness of your temper ; and if you cannot learn to say no, and to run away a little before you think there is any need of it, you will follow the worst steps of some that have been before you, and will be in a fair way to ruin. As on the other side, if you turn your eyes to your brother, you will have a living homily to direct you ; for I verily think he has not once drank one glass more than he ought since he came into the country ; and, if you can, find, or at least make, another like him.

I own your worthy predecessor, Mr. —, who had served this cure about twenty years, when I consulted him of the best way to gain my parishioners, advised me to a well-managed familiarity with them : this I endeavoured, but missed it ; you may be happier, and hit it : but then you must have a care of every step, and will need almost the wisdom of an angel of God ; all intellect, no passion, no appetite, or none at least but what you have under the exactest regimen ; which you will ask of Him who is alone able to give it. Steer clear ! beware of men ! conquer yourself, and you conquer all the world ! Moroseness and too much compliance are both dangerous ; but the latter I repent more than the former. I look upon it to have been very well becoming the wisdom of Pericles, that he would so rarely be present at feasts and public entertainments, and stay so little a while at them ; since without this precaution, as Plutarch well observes in his Life, it had been next to impossible for him to have preserved the dignity of his character, and that high veneration which he had acquired among the people. For the merry Greeks were generally wags, and great gibbers, especially in their wine, to which that may very properly be applied, *Quos inquinat, æquat*, as well as to any other vice or wickedness. And he thought it more eligible of the two, to be accounted proud, than to be really despicable.

And yet I must own, the more conversant you are with the middle and meaner sort, which are everywhere by far the greater number, you are likely to do much the more good among them. But this would be the most effectually done by a regular visiting of

your whole parish from house to house, with the fore-mentioned cautions, as Ignatius advises Polycarp ; and that even the men and maid servants.* For ■ good shepherd “knows his sheep by name,” which is the way for them to follow him. And if you take the name and age of every person, housekeepers, children, &c., you will by degrees become acquainted with them and with their circumstances ; who can read ; who can say their prayers and Catechisms ; who have been confirmed ; who have received the communion ; who are of age to do it ; who have prayers in their families ; (I doubt, but very few ;) which, though it will be ■ work of some time and pains, yet will be of vast advantage to you, if you have but the constancy and happiness to accomplish it : one not inconsiderable advantage whereof will be, that you will hereby much sooner know who are in want, that you may plead for them on occasion, to me or the officers, and the best of the parish. This method I began myself twice or thrice ; but was so diverted that I could never go quite through with it since the last fire ; and the families, in ■ dozen years, must be much altered. But to what I have of that nature by me, you are welcome, which may be some guide and ease to you, in bringing the *notitia* of your parish to greater perfection.

There is still one sort of visiting remaining, which I hope will never be omitted whenever there is occasion, and that is, your visiting the sick ; for which the Church has provided so complete and excellent an office in general, and yet leaves some particulars to the discretion of the Curate, as in the Rubrics. I doubt you will find too many who will be inexcusably careless in this matter, and the first notice you will have that they have been sick will be their passing-bell ; and yet, which I must confess is somewhat provoking, their relations will frequently exclaim against us for not having visited them. It is true I do not find the Rubric requires us to go to the sick person’s house till we have notice of it ; (as, indeed, how should we ?) and it requires, “that this notice should be given us :” but people are generally so stupidly negligent in those cases, and so terribly afraid of dying, if either the Minister or the Physician be sent for, (before they are speechless,) that charity, I think, obliges us, where we are not morally sure it will be casting pearls, &c., to go, even though we are not sent for, to sick persons, as soon as we have any knowledge, whatever way we come by it, of their dangerous illness. And thus much I take to be fairly implied in that question, “Will you visit the sick, as need shall require, or as occasion offers ?” to which you know the answer. And hereunto you will have ■

* Epist. ad Polycarp. sect. iv.

notable help by your former visiting them from house to house, and serious discourse there with them ; whereby you will be in great measure let into their circumstances and manner of life.

And now I am so near, a word or two of their funerals ; wherein if you could bring them to any regularity of time, as I think your brother has done, it would be a mighty convenience both to yourself and parishioners. However, I do entirely disapprove their burying by candle-light, (a new custom they are lately running into,) unless on necessary and extraordinary occasions. The affidavits for burying in woollen must be kept up, as the law requires, and as I have hitherto done in all my parishes.

III. The third head was, your reading Prayers, which I doubt not but you will do constantly, as it has been done formerly, on every holiday, Wednesday, and Friday, and the Second Service at the altar. And I should be pleased if it were likewise done, as is required, on the eves of holidays.

“ But who cannot read Prayers ? ” I am clearly of another mind, and think that there are but few who can or do perform it as it ought to be done. I fancy I have not heard many in my life that have done it in perfection, out of college-chapels and cathedrals ; and truly not over many there neither ; though those are likely to be the best schools, if one could be so happy as to light on a right master. I know not but I may have heard an hundred who have preached well, to one who has read Prayers so ; and it is well if one main reason for it be not that they may have preached better sermons than their own, though they cannot read Prayers with a better voice and better sense than their own. I have known persons of the soundest judgment, who would give a very near guess at a man’s capacity, by his way of reading the Prayers ; though that criterion may not be infallible, because some persons of sense may be got into an ill manner of reading, or may have so unfortunate an ear or pipe, that they may be masters neither of their own cadency nor pronounciation. Yet I know not but it may hold true, that no man without good parts, or, at least, tolerable ones, assisted with great observation and application, can read Prayers as they ought to be read, especially in a public congregation. I am of opinion, that the Prayers, even when they are not chanted, and even the Lessons, might be pricked, as are the Psalms and anthems, to be sung, so as to be read properly and musically, as the others are sung or chanted : for there is but time and tune for it, that is, high and low, short and long, in one any more than the other. But since this is not to be expected, or might not of every one be understood ; and without this it is hardly possible to give exact or intelligent rules for every cadence and pronounciation ; what remains but that we should

choose the best masters we can in this nice and difficult art, (though they who have, or think they have, it, think it is very easy,) and copy as closely as we can after them ; by observation of whom, we shall learn to avoid that dead and unpleasing monotony of too many, either in praying or preaching, who speak, like O. B., out of the ground, in one heavy tenor, without any life or motion. And the other extreme, no less grating on a judicious ear, of unequal cadences, and incondite whinings ; laying weight where there ought to be none, or omitting it where it is requisite ; like the music of a Quakers' meeting. We must also avoid a running over the Prayers, as if we were in haste to be at the end of them ; as the Papists patter theirs over their beads, or as I have heard some disaffected persons read the Prayers for the King, without any seriousness, earnestness, reverence, or devotion : as, on the other side, a drawling, canting manner, much like that mentioned the last but one ; either of which will be apt to render the reader, if not the Prayers themselves, contemptible, especially to a profane or prejudiced hearer. Whereas, if they are repeated in a grave, solemn, affecting (not affected) manner, considering well in whose name we speak, that of God's people, and taking the whole congregation along with us ; thinking as well as speaking for them as well as ourselves, and offering in their names ; as likewise to whom it is that we address, in order to obtain the most valuable blessings for them ; I should think they could scarce fail of having a resembling effect on the audience, and exceedingly disposing their minds to piety and devotion.

However, the worse extreme I look upon to be galloping over the office, in so much more haste than good speed, as to distance all the congregation, and leave them panting and breathless behind us ; especially in the Lord's Prayer and Belief, which, surely, if any part of the whole Liturgy, deserve to be repeated in a quite different manner ; as well that they may be perfectly learnt by all the people, as for other obvious reasons : and, after all, the customary and constant reading of the Psalms, and other parts of the service, will endanger our passing them over with too much glibness and formality, whereof I have heard very good men complain, and for which it is not easy to find a remedy, unless we do carefully and particularly advert, if not to every word, yet at least to every sentence.

One occasion of one of these extremes, the reading precipitately, if not owing to pure indevotion, or a natural, hasty, and abrupt way of speaking, may sometimes be the Curate's serving two or more cures every Sunday ; and it is not impossible but the case may be the same with some of the city readers, which is apt to habituate

them to over-much swiftness in their office. The other, a too great and irregular inflexion of the voice, an ungrateful tone, or twang, is sometimes learnt from an education or conversation amongst the Dissenters; very few of whom that ever I have heard have been exact speakers, especially in their prayers; and what is bred in the bone will hardly ever out again, without extraordinary pains and watchfulness and diligence: sometimes to an unfortunate squeaking pipe, or to zeal without judgment or knowledge, which is generally joined with a good share of sufficiency, and then it seldom admits of any remedy.

I cannot think of any better way for a young man who has not been much in the world to avoid both these extremes, than to desire some faithful and judicious friend, who has a good ear, to attend very diligently when he reads Prayers, especially at the beginning, and to take the ungrateful office of informing him whenever he has failed in any of the above particulars; which I am satisfied, from my own experience, it is next to impossible for any man to do for himself, by his own observation. And the same will hold as strongly, and more extensively, of preaching; for it will reach both matter, gesture, and pronunciation.

To close this head: if you have the main thing, which is true devotion within, and understand that rule of Mr. Herbert in his "Country Parson,"—pausing and yet pressing,—you will read Prayers commendably, to the glory of God and the edification of his people; and thereby, so far, (as the Apostle says of the faithful Deacons,) "purchase to yourself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." (1 Tim. iii. 13.) I know not where to bring in psalmody more properly than here, as being a great and the most elevated part of public worship. Almost every body knows that our present parochial way of singing is novel; but we must be content with it, where we cannot reach anthems and cathedral music; and so we must be, for aught I can see, with grandsire Sternhold, since there may be more than is generally believed in that observation of good Bishop Beveridge, that "our common people can understand those Psalms better than those of Tate and Brady;" for, I must own, they have a strange genius at understanding nonsense. However that be, our people here did once sing well, and it cost a pretty deal to teach them; but are, I think, pretty much fallen off from it. Yet I hope you will tune them again, by meeting them at church these long evenings, where I know honest Charles will be glad to attend you; and you will find it will have a very good effect on your congregation, especially if you could get the scholars to sing, as they do in London, and as ours did some time after my first coming hither.

IV. We are now come to the fourth head,—your studies, as previous to your preaching, and preparatory for it. Your preliminary studies are supposed a competent knowledge in, at least, the two learned languages, wherein I know you are not wanting, having taken great and successful pains to attain them. And I can assure you, the third, the Hebrew, almost as necessary as either of the other to a complete Divine, (whereof more below,) is much more easily conquered than the Greek or Latin. You are likewise, I presume, laudably grounded in our Articles, and in all the fundamentals of our Christian faith and morals, as orthodoxly held by the Church of England; or else your brother would not have recommended you unto me, nor could you have passed your examination. But these are foundations only, though excellent good ones; and if you would be a wise master-builder, eminent in your function, and of any considerable use in the world, you must still superstruct upon them, and be learning, like Socrates, to the last moment of your life. There is a great deal included in those words of the Bishop's charge to the Priest: "We have good hope that you have, long before this time, clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourself wholly to this office; so that, as much as in you lies, you will apply yourself wholly to this one thing, and draw all your cares and studies this way:" which, though it may imply the whole stress and energy of the mind, the entire habitual and actual intention, diligence, and labour, yet it does by no means exclude, but rather may be supposed particularly to refer to, and even to point out, that divinity should be the main end of our whole course of studies; and that thitherto we should draw, as auxiliaries and as to a centre, whatsoever we should observe to be proper to that end, in logic,* history, law, pharmacy, natural and experimental philosophy, chronology, geography, the mathematics, even poetry, music,† or any other parts of learning; that we should read them with that view, and study or revise them with that very design, whereby we may in time be furnished, especially if we begin soon enough, by short, not voluminous, common-place books, with a collection of many noble materials, which would be extremely useful to us in our great work.

But the main subject of a Clergyman's studies ought undoubtedly to be the holy Bible, which I look upon to be so far from being exhausted, even as to critical learning, so necessary to understand it, that I much question whether it ever will be so; because it contains an unfathomable mine of heavenly treasure, capable so richly to recompense and overbalance all our pains and labour. For it

* Ignatius.

† Plato, Ignatius.

would be strange to me if any that peruse it with intention and devotion, especially in the original, should not, every time he reads it over, discover some new beauties, and strike out some important truths, which were before unheeded or unobserved by him ; but then he should never set about this without fervent prayer to the divine Author, for his assistance in it, both to understand and practise it himself, and to teach it others. With this help, let him not despair of conquering any difficulties ; for what may appear dark at the first will often be cleared up, as with a divine light, at his second or third going over the Bible. We read in the preface to the Mons Testament, that their St. Charles (I think Borromeo) never read the Bible but on his knees : so great and just a veneration he had for it, how much soever others of the same communion are, not without obvious reasons, afraid of it. Our Church directs us, in the forementioned exhortation, “continually” (which must be at the least daily) “to pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the heavenly assistance of the Holy Ghost, that by daily reading and weighing the Scriptures, we may wax riper and stronger in our ministry.” And in the seventy-fifth Canon we are required “at all times convenient to hear or read somewhat of the holy Scriptures.” And happy is he who, like Timothy, has from his childhood known these sacred writings, been intimately conversant in them, and familiarly acquainted with them ; since nothing else, together with an holy life agreeable thereto, will more fit him for the sacred ministry, or is more likely to render him successful in it. Indeed it is not so hard a task as our own idleness may suppose, to get the whole New Testament without book ; especially if we set about it before love, or the cares or pleasures of life, or a thousand foolish things, spoil or blunt our memories. Origen, as I remember, had, when he was young, most or all of the Bible by heart. I have known children, and some of them not of the best memories, but the want of that made up with an indefatigable industry, who in twelve months’ time, or less, have perfectly got the whole New Testament *memoriter* ; and yet not intermitted their spinning or ordinary work. The ancients required their candidates for holy orders to have all the Psalms of David by heart ; and I think I have read of one who was turned back for want of it, though there lay no other objection against him. But if these things should be deemed an hard task, yet the constant and affectionate reading the holy Scriptures, and devout meditations on them, must by degrees render them so familiar to us, that we should, in process of time, and in a course of reading them over and over, almost without being aware of it, attain a general view and memory of them. And though we might not have an exact

remembrance of chapter and verse, or of the very words, (for every man is not an Origen or a Scaliger,) yet so as to retain the sum of them ; and even without a Concordance, at least very easily with one, to have recourse to most texts on occasion ; as the comparing of one text with another, especially the Old Testament with the New, and the different translations with the originals, I look upon to be the best commentary in the world.

And now I have mentioned the originals, I return to what I hinted before about the Hebrew language ; without a competent skill wherein, we must take God's meaning upon trust from others : and if we borrow our bucket, or make use of canals, the water may be, and generally is, tinged in the drawing or passage ; which we may have much clearer and sweeter if we ourselves will but be at the pains to fetch it at the fountain-head ; without which I should look upon the most famed and popular Preacher to be little better than a retailer in divinity. I have often said, and am satisfied of the truth of the fact by experiment, that a person of no extraordinary parts, but of an honest and diligent mind, may make himself tolerably master of the biblic Hebrew, so as to read and understand most chapters in the Bible, in twelve months' time at the farthest. As, indeed, what should hinder him ? there being but two thousand roots, or original words, in that part of the sacred language ; which we may find together in Leusden, and in many other books, and which, if I reckon right, may, by ten in a day, be got by heart in much less than a year's time. But I must remember I am not teaching Hebrew, being but indifferently learnt in it myself ; and yet should be glad if I could serve *vice cotis*, to excite others to the study of it : which, if set about for God's sake, and for the service of his church, it would mightily sweeten the labour, and facilitate the attaining of it. And if you have the Hebrew, you have the Samaritan, which is the same through the Pentateuch, except in the years of the Patriarchs, and a very few other variations. The Chaldee differs not much from the Hebrew, (I mean as a language,) though, as I remember, we have no strict version of the Hebrew text in it, but an ancient (in some parts) and learned paraphrase on it ; nor the Syriac from that ; or even the Arabic, which they say is easy to an Englishman, because we have much the same pronunciation, and which I have observed very much follows the LXX. ; though, as I remember, it is not a literal translation from it, as the Vulgate does, in many places, the Chaldee paraphrast ; into which, in some parts of it, I doubt some words are crept in out of marginal notes. All which languages, as Ravius thinks, as well as the Ethiopic, (and I believe it may be much the same with the Persian, especially with that of the ancient Persers, whereof we have large

specimens in Dr. Hyde's *Religio Veterum Persarum*,) are only different dialects of the old mother Hebrew language, and seem to be as nearly allied as the Greek dialects, or as those of our old Teutonic, under various forms still in being; which versions and paraphrasts, together with the Vulgar and LXX., and as much of the Hexapla as could be recovered, and the Alexandrine, (though not exact,) and perhaps some others, are found in the Polyglott, taking in the marginal notes and supplements; and happy is he who has so rich a treasure by him; wherein, almost at one view, he may see the sense and learning of the ancients as to the meaning of the Scriptures; though most surely, as I think most pleasantly, if he can draw it there from the originals.

Neither ought the Deuterocanonical or Apocryphal books to be neglected, being of great and venerable antiquity; some of them, particularly the Book of Wisdom and that of the Maccabees, appearing plainly to be alluded or referred to by that great and learned textuary St. Paul, if not even by our Saviour. The moral and religious sentences and observations are very useful and instructive; and if reduced to common-places, and prudently interspersed on occasion, would give a venerable turn and aspect to any sermon, and have a good effect, as has been often experienced, on the audience. The historical parts are necessary for the connexion of sacred history with profane, and of the Old Testament with the New; as has been admirably shown to us country Clergymen, who have not many of us had an opportunity before of understanding much of the matter, by the learned Dr. Prideaux. And the prophetical part seems in some places surprisingly clear and noble; even in Tobit, if his dog, and his sparrows, and his devil had been left out, or sunk together, as I have often wished, in the river Euphrates. Though if what we find in the preface to the second part of the book of Homilies be not repealed or obsolete, I think we are not so strictly bound down as we seem to be by the calendar on this occasion. For there we read, that "where it may so chance some chapter of the Old Testament" (and surely much more of the Apocrypha) "to fall in order to be read on Sundays or holidays, which were better to be changed with some other of the New Testament, of more edification; it should be well done to spend your time to consider well of such chapters beforehand," &c. But on this head it would be proper to consult your Right Reverend and very learned Diocesan; because it is easy to foresee what ill uses might be made of this liberty by any imprudent reader.

Nor ought even the earliest Apocryphal pieces in the first Christian ages to be wholly neglected, some of which contain much of the Jewish notions, customs, genius, and learning; particularly

that ancient forgery of some Judaizing Christian, (as I doubt were one or two of the Esdrases,) which is still in all our people's hands; the pretended Testament of the twelve Patriarchs, though there is some vile doctrine in it; and even the *Historia Jesu Infantis*, which I have heard is very ancient, though I have never seen it, may be worth reading. I wish we had even Judas's Gospel, so called, and the *Acta Pilati*; (those, I mean, which the persecuting Emperors caused to be read in the Schools, though perhaps the younger forgery;) both of which it would have rejoiced Toland's heart, as a supplement to his *Nazarenus*, to have midwived into the world. I hope the Shepherd of Hermas and Barnabas, if not Agbarus's Epistles, are of a better stamp; though I give up the Epistle to the Laodiceans, as being little worth. The two Epistles of Clemens I believe are genuine, as there appears a beautiful simplicity in them; their faith is standard, and their morals and zeal are admirable: his pretended Constitutions we shall meet with again a little lower. As for the blessed Ignatius's Epistles, they can never be enough read, or praised, or valued, next to the inspired writings; (though he sometimes owns he was himself inspired;) and I wish with all my heart I had them all without book. I wonder any that can read either Greek or so much as English, unless violently prejudiced, should make any doubt which are the genuine. I have examined all Mr. Whiston's objections against the shorter, and think I can prove there is nothing of weight in them; though I have not the same entire satisfaction, for some reasons, as to the Acts of his Martyrdom. Next to these is the blessed Polycarp's Epistle to the Philippians, anciently, as I remember, read in some churches; and a few other fragments of that age, to which Grabe's *Spicilegium* may help you. All the rest, and I believe more than are honest, you will find in Cotelierius's edition, with Pearson's and other learned Notes upon them, which I was never so rich as to call my own. But your brother has Dr. Smith's Ignatius; or Bishop Wake's Translation will supply you with that, and several of the rest, with excellent Notes, which contain the sum of what has been written by the best critics on those subjects.

The Constitutions would be worth gold, as showing us much of the face, discipline, and ritual of the ancient church, could we separate the dross from them. But as they are, they stink so vilely of Arian interpolations, (as does the bastard Ignatius,) from end to end, that I doubt we must despair of ever finding them sweet and clean again. And yet they may both be of good use, among many other things, to confound the Socinians; since their elder brethren do therein prove the pre-existence of the Logos before his incarna-

tion, from several texts in the Old Testament, where Faustus and his disciples will find nothing of it. Both of these were, I doubt not, cooked up during the Arian controversy, and that for the same not very honest reasons. Dionysius, the sham Areopagite, seems to have been much of the same age, though not heretical, as I remember. The Trismegisticks were, I believe, before either; and were certainly compiled, not without some eloquence and learning, by some subtle Gnostic or Valentinian heretic. The Verses of the Sibyls are likewise very ancient; and I look upon the Orphaicks to be much of the same standing; though I have only seen quotations from both.

Next come the Apologists; and though of different ages, it may not be amiss to take a short view of them here together. Tertullian has fire enough, and too much where he is in the wrong; Justin and Clemens Alexandrinus, sense and learning; Minutius, politeness; Theophilus and Athenagoras, worth reading; and so may be Arnobius, though it has not been my hap to have read him. They have all of them, in most places, good argument: though had we one Origen fair, complete, and genuine, (I had almost said, with all his faults,) he would be worth them all together, and half the world beside; as we may guess by his admirable piece against Celsus; though I confess we may track some of his *nostrums* even there, (if that has not had foul play,) as well as the rest of his writings.

And here Irenæus must by no means be forgotten, though sometimes credulous, if not fabulous, being justly valuable for his great learning, acuteness, (for the most part,) orthodoxy, zeal, and devotion. If you add to these St. Cyprian, who is safer than his master Tertullian, you will have the top of the first and second, and be coming into the third, century. As for Lactantius, though I think something lower, his book *De Mortibus Persecutorum* was well worth finding: but in his other works, he shows himself either so novel a Christian, or so rank an heretic, that I have scarce patience to read him; though he comes not far behind Tully in the beauty of his periods, and purity of his language.

Nor should the heathen moralists be slighted, either before Christ, or after. Those before, as Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato: the two latter of whom I have observed, even in their finest pieces, as the *Phædo*, to be almost transcripts of the former; every page of them being full of his doctrines and notions, most of which are agreeable enough to revealed religion and the Christian faith. As for Confucius, I could never find any great matter in him; and besides, do vehemently suspect the genuineness of what we have given us as his writings. Tully is worth all the Romans; his

Offices and *Natura Deorum* are exceedingly well worth reading and mastering. I have heard his Offices highly commended by very good judges, who have observed, that he seldom misses the mark; but in determining of moral cases of the greatest niceness and importance, is generally on the right side of the question: his *Natura Deorum* has exhausted almost all the philosophy of the ancients concerning the origin of the world, and the being of a God, and has noble arguments for the latter; much clearer and stronger, in my sorry opinion, than those in Plato's *De Legibus*: though he seems to have been obliged to the Academy for some of them, as well as for those of Providence, which, as I remember, he carries farther than Plato did; I mean as to theory and argumentation: for he droops miserably at the latter end, when, I think, he expresses his own sense, and stumbles into the broadest scepticism; the great occasion whereof I conceive to be, that his party in the State had the worst of it; as many have done the same in our own and the last age, with much greater light, on the same temptations; which I look upon to be a sure indication of a weak and ill-weighed mind: for a wise, a brave, and a virtuous man will stand by his principles, as they will stand by him, though the world should be turned topsy-turvy, or even crumbled into atoms.

After Christ is Seneca, whose cursed Morals are well worth the reading, whatever were his practice; as are the later heathen moralists and theologists, (if we may so call them,) or rather theurgists, who flourished when Christianity began to spread more largely in the world. You will easily observe how barely they pilfer from our religion, to patch up their own; which yet they only contrived to bring as near the patriarchal religion (not yet sufficiently traced) as they could, still retaining their novel idolatry; as did Constantine Chlorus afterwards, in Ammianus Marcellinus; much as the Bishop of Meaux, in his "Papist represented and misrepresented," in relation to primitive Christianity in our own age and memory; and I wish there were now no private Deists, who did the same with the Gospel. These were perhaps some of the most dangerous enemies to Christianity of any before or since; and yet may be very useful in the defence of it. You will be surprised to find, 1. The weakness and precariousness of their arguments; how much they prove too much or too little. 2. How far they symbolize with the Papists, or *vice versâ*, as to traditions, worshipping the Virgin and sub-gods; and with the Deists and infidels, as to objections against the Scriptures, mysteries, &c. The moralists are chiefly Epictetus, Simplicius, Antoninus, Plutarch, Hierocles, Maximus Tyrius; to whom you may add, Celsus, Julian, Jamblichus, Porphyry, Proclus, Libanius, or what you can get of them:

though I have seen nothing but fragments of these six last, except a few laboured pieces of Julian, as his *Oratio de Matre Deorum*, &c. Likewise their historians, Ammianus Marcellinus, I think Eunapius and Zosimus: I have forgot the rest; but not Symmachus's Oration *pro Arâ Victoriæ*, which, as I remember, is both in Prudentius and St. Ambrose, and which was one of the last struggles for open Heathenism in Rome, where you will see one of the most venerable pleas of persecution and error for an indulgence and toleration, as soon as the edge of the law is turned against them. I do not here mention Apollonius Tyanæus because he is of any credit or worth; for it is an ill-told and ill-concerted fable, and one of Æsop's is worth more than the whole book; but because some have made so great a noise about him. And if you could get the Alcoran and *Liber Saddir*, and Metaphrastes, and the Golden Legend, (or Cressy will do almost as well,) they will all stand very decently together, and it were a pity that two shelves should part them.

The fourth century brings in the Sabellian and Arian heresies, whereof you can scarce have a clear and a just notion, without reading as much as you can find of the History of the Council of Nice, and the preceding and succeeding Synods, in Eusebius, Socrates, Athanasius, (*De Symbolis*,) even Philostorgius, and other historians who have writ of them: for want of which, the History of Monsieur (I think) Tillemont, lately translated, may make a good succedaneum; though still the fountains for me, when we can get at them. In those historians you will find, that of three hundred and eighteen fathers in the Council of Nice, venerable for their age, sufferings, piety, and learning, there were but very few, as I remember not all the odd number, but what unanimously professed they had received from their forefathers that orthodox faith which the Church of England, and all the national Churches of the Protestants, now hold, concerning the real Divinity and actual eternity of the Son of God, and that he was consubstantial with the Father. Nor did Eusebius himself deny, but distinctly acknowledge, in his Letter, as I remember, to his own people of Cæsarea, that this so-much-controverted word was used in the same sense by the ancients; and he accordingly himself subscribed the creed, with that word in it, as well as the rest of the Council. And all the Dissenters came in, I know not whether three or four only excepted, though I think they too did it at the last; and if any of them did it fallaciously and hypocritically, and afterwards shrunk from their subscriptions, or explained them away, it is no matter of credit to their party, any more than those are who now follow the deeds of their forefathers, and fill up the measure of their iniqui-

ties. Those holy fathers confessed, as has been said, the actual and eternal existence and generation of God the Son; as did indisputably the blessed Ignatius a good while before them, as he and they had learnt from St. John, that He was the A and Ω , the Jehovah, the Word which was in the beginning with God, and God was that Word; and from St. Paul, that He was the $\acute{\omicron} \Omega$, (scarce half rendered in our translation,*) “over all, God blessed for ever;” which was impossible for Him to have been, were He not substantially and essentially, though not personally, One with the Father; unless our adversaries have monopolized both truth and reason; as “doubtless, they are the people, and wisdom shall die with them.” Nor yet did the ancients by any means deny the economy or subordination of the divine Persons; nor were they of the opinion of the modern Autotheans, Calvin, &c., whom Calamy seems to follow; but clearly asserted and distinguished the $\Gamma\epsilon\nu\eta\tau\acute{\omicron}\nu$ of the Son from the $\text{'}\text{A}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\eta\tau\omicron\nu$ of the Father, and upon that account the $\text{'}\text{Υ}\pi\acute{\epsilon}\rho\omicron\chi\omicron\nu$, or prerogative, of the Father; as is evident from that glorious Epistle of Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, almost in the infancy of this dispute; with which exactly concurs the main stream of the *ante* and *post Nicene* Fathers, notwithstanding, perhaps, some misinterpretable expressions, which yet are cleared up by Pearson and Bull, whose learned arguments on that head may be slighted and censured by trifling heretics, but can never be answered.

Most of the Fathers in this age are well worth reading, but especially St. Athanasius; though above all St. Basil, by what little I have read of him, and as he stands recommended to me by the best judges. And yet, if I were to preach in Greek, St. Chrysostom should be my master. You would do well to get accurately acquainted with all their ages and periods, which you will gain with little difficulty from Dupin; as well as those of the first Councils, whom our Church receives, as she does the Fathers, as witnesses of the faith and exemplars in practice, and for the most part too in discipline; though she neither declares nor believes them infallible, but receives the Scriptures only as an unerring rule of faith and life. By these writings of the three or four first centuries, you will be sufficiently armed against the novel opinions of the Papists, sectaries, and heretics; none of which, unless I am exceedingly mistaken, no, not even praying for the dead, as the Romanists now manufacture it, you will

* I would point it thus, Rom. ix. 5, $\acute{\omicron} \text{'}\text{A}\Omega$, $\acute{\epsilon}\omega\iota \text{'}\text{A}\nu\tau\omega\nu$, (Is not that $\text{'}\text{Υ}\psi\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\varsigma$?) “God, blessed for ever;” and let the Arians make their best of this punctuation.

hitherto find amongst them, but unanswerable arguments against them.

Thus have I cut you out work, as I imagine, for about half seven years among the ancients ; and if you have a mind to step a little lower, St. Austin and St. Jerome want neither piety, zeal, wit, nor learning ; though I think verily St. Jerome had very hard measure, to be scourged, so much as in a dream, for doting too much upon Cicero, and following him too closely. St. Ambrose had courage, wit, piety, orthodoxy, and as much eloquence as was then left among the Romans ; as Boëtius, philosophy, which he applied to good purposes. Cassiodore is likewise valuable for sound judgment and critical learning. Lower still, Salvian and Gildas would be read ; as Bede should by no means be omitted ; or afterwards, our Saxon Councils and Homilies. I wish we had more that was authentic of our ancient British Churches, either in North or South Britain, or Ireland ; in the latter of which learning is said to have been refuged, especially in their noble monasteries, when it was well nigh banished out of the rest of Europe : for want of which we must, I doubt, be content with those gleanings which are left us by Bishop Usher, and the two Worcesters ; for the dust of gold is precious. I know not what the world was a doing for many blind centuries after this, nor shall I therefore trouble myself nor you about them. Yet now and then a great genius arose, and shone through that palpable darkness : such was our Bradwardin, who has many excellent things in him ; and Grosthead, a person at that time of uncommon and surprising parts and learning. The remainder of seven years you have for the moderns. And who can be a master, in less time than that, of any ordinary art or trade ? Though, I confess, much less will serve to make him a babbler or a blunderer in it.

We are now got into day-break again, and stepping down to the Reformation. I am far from so much as pretending to be accurate, yet shall point you to some authors, which I have either read or looked into, and which have made the deepest impression on my memory, and shall mention both sides, as they occur to me. Our nearest concern is doubtless with our own country. I do not expect to see any solid reason why any national Church should not have power to reform itself, on the plan of the Scriptures and the primitive Churches ; I think we did so, and that it has been abundantly proved against our adversaries. The steps which were taken herein seem to be pretty impartially marked out by Dr. Burnet, with vast application, ingenuity, and labour, notwithstanding any personal weaknesses, or all the objections which have been made against his work. I have not read much of Luther ; Melancthon seems

ingenious, polite, and well-natured; Calvin is very well worth reading with caution; Bucer, pious, learned, and moderate; Bellarmine has all the strength of the Romanists; our Fisher was a great man; and Stephen Gardiner far from being inconsiderable. The Homilies should be often and carefully read. Erasmus is useful and pleasant; Jewel's Apology, neat and strong; Cranmer, pious and learned: but Ridley for me, as to what I have seen of him, for clearness, closeness, strength, and learning, among all the Reformers. Hooker every one knows, and his strength and firmness can hardly be too much commended; nor is there any great danger of his being solidly answered.

In King Charles the First's time, Laud against Fisher is esteemed unanswerable; and so is Chillingworth against the Papists, who is owned by all to have had a very strong head, and to have been one of the best disputants in the world: though that got neither of them any better quarter from the Goths and Vandals of that age. I know not whether Forbes, the Scotchman, wrote in that age, but he was a great Divine: Grotius flourished, I think, rather before, who is the prince of the commentators, and worth all the rest; but would be perused with caution, for he seems not always consistent with himself: and Father Petau limps of the same side. Saumaise is very learned and useful; and so are the Vossiuses and Casaubons; and Blondel only wanted a better cause; Hammond is pious, learned, sound, judicious, and orthodox, if you will but throw aside his Jerusalem, and Gnostics, and Simon Magus; Sanderson is a master-casuist; Mede has many bright and surprisingly happy thoughts; and your last but one would have had much ado to have unravelled his scheme, and have cleared the Pope from being Antichrist; Lightfoot was very conversant with the Jewish writers and notions, and thereby illustrates many texts; Selden has much, and some very useful and curious, learning. The critics are worth a king's ransom; but you have most of them in Pool's Synopsis, and something more; which book will therefore supply the want of many others to a country Clergyman. Episcopius and Limborch have sense, strength, and clearness; but you know which way they lean: Spanheim is a noble critic: Huetius's *Demonstratio Evangelica*, exceeding useful and learned: Messieurs De Port Royal and Mr. Pascal, worthy their character; he has, indeed, most surprising thoughts, and it is enough to melt a mountain of ice to read him. I should wish Monsieur De Renty were in more hands, were every body able to sift the superstition from the devotion. The *Reliquiæ Carolinæ*, if they were all genuine, as I doubt not but the *Eikon* is, would be highly worth reading; as are the

excellent works of *The Whole Duty of Man*, whereof Archbishop Sharp thought Dr. Stern was the author.

I may not perhaps have been exact as to the time when some of these great men flourished; but about the close of that period, and during the reign of King Charles II., we had many glorious lights in the church of God, some of whom I shall mention. In the first rank stood Bishop Wilkins, who may be almost said to have taught us first to preach; as his kinsman, Archbishop Tillotson, to have brought the art of preaching near perfection; had there been as much life as there is of politeness, and generally of cool, clear, close reasoning, and convincing argument in his Sermons: though I have heard Stillingfleet accounted the more universal scholar, if not the longer and the stronger head; and perhaps few but Grotius have equalled him, especially in his *Origines Sacræ*; though I think there are some errors in them: and yet Archbishop Sharp had that natural and easy vigour of thought, expression, and pronunciation, that it is a moot case whether he were not a more popular pulpit-orator than either of the former. Bishop Pearson all the world allows to have been of almost inimitable sense, piety, and learning; his critique on Ignatius, and his tract on the Creed, must last as long as time, and ought to be in every Clergyman's study in England, though he could purchase nothing but the Bible and Common Prayer-Book besides them. Bishop Bull comes next for their subject and way of thinking and arguing: a strong and nervous writer, whose discourses and directions to his Clergy can scarce be too often read. Bishop Beveridge's Sermons are a library; writ in the most natural, moving, unaffected style, especially the introductions, which seem generally to be thoroughly wrought. They are perhaps as like those of the apostolical ages as any between them and us; and I know not whether one would not as soon wish to preach like him, as like any since the Apostles; because I cannot tell whether any has done more good by his Sermons. Bishop Spratt was a polite and clean writer, and one of the first masters of the English language; but he has left little in divinity; though what he has is equal to his character, and his charge to his Clergy is admirable. Bishop Burnet, though not a native, and some few Scotticisms may be tracked in most of his works, as there were more in his pronunciation; yet is reckoned a masterly writer in the English language: he had a prodigious genius; a memory that would retain everything; a body that would go through or bear anything: for he told me himself, that in some part of his life, when his circumstances were but low, he lived upon three-half pence a day for a considerable time, in order to retrieve them: had in preaching, and conversation too, a tor-

rent of eloquence, like one of the branches of *Ætna* when it rolls into the sea ; but it neither flowed so smooth nor so clear as Bishop Ken's ; whom few could hear, as I have been informed, any more than it is easy now to read him, with dry eyes ; though I believe he has left but little behind him. As for Burnet's great work, I have shot my bolt about it already ; and should be glad to see a better piece than his upon our Articles. Bishop Taylor is learned, devout, and ingenious ; Bishop Hopkins, judicious and useful ; Comber and Nicholls, necessary for the understanding our Liturgy ; Cave's *Primitive Christianity*, &c., good books for a Clergyman's family ; Isaac Barrow, strong, masculine, and noble : Oxford Edwards has done good service against the Socinians : Spencer, Cudworth, and More, have great variety of useful and recondite learning ; but the two former to be read with caution. The *Ethics* of the latter are incomparable. Waple, of St. Sepulchre's, was a great man, though almost unheard of in the world ; and has left many valuable manuscripts behind him : Dodwell has piety and learning, but over-fond of nostrums : Norris, not contemptible : Ray and Derham, as useful as entertaining ; and so are several pieces of Mr. Boyle's. I would not have you unacquainted with Bochart, if you can help it. As for lesser tracts and sermons, there is no end : Claget's, Calamy's, and Smalridge's *Sermons*, are standards ; and so are Atterbury's. But I forget that I designed not to mention those who are yet living : and yet I must not forget the learned and laborious Whitby, though I think he had been happier if he had died some years sooner, and especially before he had brought his little squirt to quench the biggest part of hell-fire, or to diminish the honour of his Lord and Master,—but I forget that I am growing old myself ; and that, while he appeared to be orthodox, I was not worthy to carry his books after him. Mr. Le Clerc has more wit than learning, though he seems to think he has more of both than he really has ; and yet I doubt has less faith than either. I am afraid he copies after Bayle ; but never reached him in his sense, nor, I hope, quite in his infidelity. I wish he had never writ anything worse than his *Harmony on the Gospels* ; though I doubt there is some poison in it. One would have Patrick's and Kidder's *Commentaries* : I can say nothing how the new work on the Bible is performed ; for I have not yet weighed what is done of it. The *London Cases*, against the Papists and Dissenters, would be a treasure, if one could get them. I wish we had something of the same nature against the Arians ; and, in the mean time, that you or I had all Boyle's *Lectures*. Bingham gives a pretty account of the structure and order of the ancient churches. The *Winter-Evening's Conference* is strong and ingenious ; and so is the *Gentleman*

Instructed. Scott has made good use of the Platonical notions in the service of religion, as South of the Schoolmen. Dr. Stanhope's Translations are very useful to excite devotion; and so are the works of Dr. Horneck.

We have likewise some laymen who have laboured to good purpose on religious subjects. Judge Hale is strong, pious, and nervous; Nelson, genteel, affecting, zealous, and instructive. Leslie against the Jews and Deists, is demonstration; and his Snake in the Grass, as useful as entertaining. Kettlewell, wonderfully pious and devout. Dr. Hickes's Letters against the Papists, I think unanswerable: but I find I have stumbled from the laymen to the Non-jurors; some of whom have writ well against the Deists; and I wish they had never worse employed their labour.

Nor must my old friends (and I think yours) the Dissenters, be entirely forgot. Some of Mr. Baxter's works are useful as well as pious: his Christian Directory, though voluminous, has many cases in it; and he could not but have much experience in those matters. His Saints' Rest, and Family Book, and Call to the Unconverted, I believe, may have done good, notwithstanding some nostrums in them. I wish I had his *Gildas Salvianus* again: Directions to the Clergy for the Management of their People, which I lost when my house was last burnt, among all the rest. He had a strange pathos and fire in his practical writings, but more in his preaching; and, as I remember, spoke well. Dr. Annesley was not only of great piety and generosity, but of very good learning, especially among the Schoolmen and commentators; notwithstanding Mr. Wood's unjust reflections upon him. In these collections of Morning Lectures, you will find the cream of the Dissenters' sermons. Charnock, though too diffuse and lax, after their way, and dying young, had much learning, and has very good stuff in him. Howe is close, strong, and metaphysical. Alsop, merry, and, as it were, witty. Bates, polite, and had a good taste of the Belles Lettres; being well read in the Latin, English, and Italian poets, and personally and intimately acquainted with Mr. Cowley, as he told me at the last visit I made him at Hackney, after I was (as I remember) come over to the Church of England. Williams was orthodox, had good sense, and especially that of getting money; he was the head of the Presbyterians in his time, and not frowned on by the Government. He has writ well against the Antinomians; and, as I have heard, hindered Pierce, the Arian, from burrowing in London, I think, as long as he lived. Calamy, as I heard, has succeeded his brother doctor in some things; I wish he had in his best. His style is not amiss, but I think I have proved he is not a fair writer. Bradbury is fire and feather; Burgess had more sense than he

thought it proper to make use of ; Taylor, a man of sense ; Shower, polite ; Cruso, unhappy ; Owen is valued amongst them, for some skill in antiquity ; the elder (Dr.) Owen was a gentleman and a scholar ; the younger Henry is commended for his laborious work on the Old Testament. Clarkson (Dr. Tillotson's Tutor) had more of the Fathers than all of them ; though Dr. Maurice over-matched him, and had, besides, the better cause. Gale's Court of the Gentiles is admired by them, and has some useful collections in it. Tombes and Stennet have all for the Anabaptists, as Wall enough against them ; and Robert Barclay more than all the Quakers have to say for themselves.

From these last, it is an easy transition to our Deists and heretics, which it is not impossible to meet with here : however, we ought to be prepared against them. Hobbs was ■ man of wit, and melted the terms of philosophy into clean English ; but is a fallacy almost from one end of his works to the other ; and I do not know whether I have read one concluding argument in him ; and therefore, though Bramhall, Clarendon, and Tenison have dealt well enough with him, yet I think Echard was the fitter match for him. I wish Mr. Locke had not traced him too near, though he is easily traced in him ; he had ■ much stronger head, believed there was such a being as a spirit, and seems to have been, at least, almost a Christian, by his Reasonableness of Christianity, which is, in the main, a very good book ; though you will have better eyes than I have, if you can find anything in it, or in all his contests with Bishop Stillingfleet, wherein, though sufficiently pressed, he owns the Divinity of our Saviour. Spinoza seems to me to have no great matter in him, though so much magnified by his party. The Oracles of Reason, the Rights of the Church, the Freethinker, Blount himself, and the rest of the gang, have reflection enough, and assurance enough, but little or no argument ; and, for the most part, only say the same thing over and over. As for the Arians, I wish Dr. Clarke were a more contemptible adversary ; but if he will speak out, I doubt not but Dr. Waterland will be able to deal with him and all his party together.

I am now almost weary myself, and well may I weary you. I think I have not writ all this out of ostentation ; for it is an easy thing to keep a small catalogue of books in one's memory, and one thing draws on another. I do not think all these books absolutely necessary, though I wish you knew where to find them, or but one half of them, for your own sake as well as mine : where I know any of them are to be found near us, I shall mark them in a catalogue at the end. However, this general view may do you no harm ; and if you light on any of them, you may read what you please, and

leave the rest to cobwebs. But there are two or three books which were liked to have slipped my memory, which you cannot well be without : those are Watson's Complete Incumbent, and the Clergyman's *Vade Mecum* ; and if you or I could compass Bishop Gibson's Codex, we should be a great deal richer than we are like to be. But the grapes are nevertheless sweet because we cannot reach them.

When you have read a book once over, if it be worth it, I would advise you to schematise it ; at which your brother has the best hand of any that I know. After that, you may make alphabetical references to your scheme, of any passages you would remember, with page, or line, or section, that you may have immediate recourse to it on occasion, and thereby save the drudgery of transcribing ; unless the book be not your own, or the passage very well worth it. If you think all this a great deal of trouble, I own it is so, but pleasing trouble, if our great end be right ; for one soul is worth infinitely more than all our pains and labour. The *Materia Medica* is large ; a skilful Physician will get as well acquainted with it as he can, though a quack will content himself with two or three remedies.

And now your armoury is (it is to be hoped) well furnished, it will be proper to draw out and exercise ; since otherwise you will make but a poor fight on it, though you had the best weapons in the world : for the greatest Clerks are not always the best Preachers, any more than the wisest men : which brings us to,

V. The fifth head,—that of preaching ; not indeed the whole of a Minister's office, but a great part of it : for to this very thing we are ordained, “ Take thou authority to preach the word of God ! ”

And here I am sure I ought to blush, for pretending to give rules for that wherein I was never master : yet it is far easier to direct than it is to practise. I think I have in my time aimed at something, which I have with some attention read and heard from the best Preachers ; and though I have come short of it for want of constancy and opportunity, you may, and I hope will, attain it. In order whereunto, it may not be improper to consider some generals relating to sermonizing : and then to add a little of the structure and requisites of particular sermons.

First : a general method for sermons. And your best that I can think on, is to begin a course as accurate as you can make them, on all the principles of religion, so as to comprise, as near as may be, the whole body of divinity. Some have done this on the Thirty-nine Articles ; others on the Catechism ; and I believe both may be wrought into one scheme, which might be still better. Proper texts you will be furnished with in those scriptures which you have for proof of our Articles ; though I had rather you

gathered them from your own reading and observation : for, as the religion of the Church of England came first from the Bible, so, thanks be to God, it may be unanswerably proved from it, and resolved into it ; and we only make use of the Fathers, as did St. Basil and Nazianzen, for illustration, and probable, not infallible, interpretation. This great work should be set about immediately, because it will take you up some years ; and you are not sure that life will be long enough to finish it. These sermons may be best written, or rather copied, as this letter is, on one side of ■ large quarto, (though I would advise you to write them in a much larger character,) and the other side blank, for additions and alterations ; as you will see great occasion for both, as you increase in knowledge and judgment ; and that perhaps to the last moment of your life.

And now, secondly, as to the structure and requisites of particular sermons, as well those already mentioned, as others occasional, and of another character, on common or extraordinary subjects. Nothing is more evident than that a sermon may be too close and strong in ■ common course of preaching, and for a popular auditory : though this is an error on the right-hand, especially at the beginning ; and out of one such sermon you may honestly make two or three afterwards, and that with more edification to your people ; as at the first, one would, if one could, make one out of two or three ; and it is well if we can do it to our own satisfaction. And yet there is a worse extreme than this ; for I must own I do sincerely hate what some call a fine sermon, with just nothing in it. I know not whether I ought to make such a comparison ; but I cannot for my life help thinking, that it is very like our fashionable poetry,—a mere polite nothing.

The first thing I would advise, after you had pitched on the subject and text, (if not before,) is, that you should humbly and earnestly pray unto God to assist you in that work ; that you may write and speak that which is right of Him, and most proper for his people ; and that He would grant success to your labours, as knowing who it is that only gives the increase. It was Bishop Sanderson, as I remember, as quoted by Bishop Bull, that was wont to say, “ The violence of the closet ” (meaning the Minister’s fervent prayer there) “ does more than the violence of the pulpit, in the great work of the conversion of sinners, and towards success in our office ; ” and then fall to in the name of God. And the first thing I would set about, should be the short plan or outlines of the sermon : the explication of the text and context should not be over short, but of a just length, which is nearest the ancient Homily-way of preaching. The propositions or doctrines, which

would not be too long, or too many, and the clearer the better, include and open the main drift of the design. The illustrations should be proper and lively; the proofs close and home; the motives strong and cogent; the inferences and application, natural, and yet laboured with all the force of sacred eloquence: nor should human helps be slighted, especially Aristotle's Rhetoric, which, when mellowed down and adapted, as far as circumstances will permit, to our age and taste, I should think might do wonders; and so might Longinus's Rules for the Sublime; for is not human nature still the same? Though if our pulpit-oratory be wanting in any part, it seems to be so in this,—our English Preachers having depended chiefly on the strength of their reasonings; which yet, if you cannot persuade the passions (or, if you please, the affections) to vote on the same side, we find, in fact, will go but a little way with most of the world.

It is evident, that every Priest is obliged, by his own solemn stipulation, not only to “minister the doctrine and sacraments, but likewise the discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this realm hath received the same;” and yet further, “to teach the people committed to our charge, with all diligence to observe them; and with the like faithful diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange doctrine, contrary to God's word:” the want of doing which, if not the direct contrary thereto, has brought many mischiefs upon the nation. And if ever you should live in such times, that this should not be thought the way to rise, as in the days of our forefathers, you would yet find your account in it, though you waited for your preferment till another world. In order to perform this solemn vow and promise, a prudent occasional mixture of controversial divinity (impartially levelled, though without bitterness, against the Papists, sectaries, and heretics) with practical,—reducing all thither, and showing what influence one has on the other, (wherein Bishop Beveridge is, almost every where, equally zealous and happy,)—is the best method that I can think of, will bring you solid comfort in the faithful discharge of your duty, and a well-grounded reputation in the church of God. Nor shall I add any more of preaching, both for the reasons given at the entrance on this head; and because you may almost everywhere meet with better directions than I am capable of giving you; especially in our Bishop Gibson's printed letter to his Clergy. Only this; that if you would be popular, you must get your sermons without book, which would be a double advantage on account of the shortness of your sight; and which less than a twelvemonth's practice would make much more easy to you than you can now imagine.

I do not think you will much trouble your parishioners with

politics in the pulpit, or out of it either : I believe you will be all much of a mind as to those matters. Yet you will not forget the 5th of November, whereon we perpetuate the memory of God's signal mercies to us and to our forefathers, on a double account, in delivering us from Popery and arbitrary power ; and I cannot but wonder that any who are willing to remember the former, should not be thankful for the latter : the 30th of January, which I can hardly think will be repealed while we have a King in England ; or the 29th of May, without which we should have had no King at all : all which I think are established by Acts of Parliament, and this last to be read publicly in the church every year the Sunday before, as in the rubric : or the 1st of August, the day of His Majesty's happy accession to the throne of these kingdoms, which for that reason is, you know, likewise to be kept holy. By this you will keep up in your people's minds a just abhorrence of all Popish, fanatical, and disloyal principles and practices ; especially if you preach, as I would have you do, a sermon on all those four days, every year, proper to the occasion. As to party disputes, you shall not say I have attempted to bias you one way or another : the less you meddle with them, I think, the better. *Experto crede !* Yet you will never forget that you are an Englishman and a Christian.

Catechising is distinguished from preaching, perhaps more in name than in thing, especially as it was among the ancients, when large accurate lectures or discourses were made in public by their greatest men, Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, &c., on all the heads of religion : when the Catechist was a stated officer in the church, as I think he ought to be still, at least in all our larger parishes ; and when the catechumens made so great a part of the congregation. Which office, that of Catechist, seems now to be divided, by our constitution and canons, between the Minister and the Schoolmaster ; though these cannot excuse parents and masters in the neglect of it, where they can read, or say it themselves without book. To prevent or cure which too common neglect, I should think it would be a very good way for you sometimes, and especially at the beginning of Lent, or whenever you see occasion, to read to your congregation the two first Rubrics after the Catechism ; as also the fifty-ninth and seventy-ninth Canons. In all this part of your duty you will have two great advantages : one, in a pious and careful Schoolmaster, who I am sure will be ready and glad to take and follow your directions : the other, by your living in his house, where you will have an eye over the children, and see how they work and profit ; especially the charity-children, whose number I wish we knew how to augment, as well as that a way might be found to add some work to their learning ; which I

am sure were not difficult, if people were but heartily disposed to do it, and I am not without hopes that you may sometime prevail with your neighbours to do it, though I could not; if you strike soon before the iron cools. This would effectually obviate and silence an objection which I have heard from some thrifty persons, against all the charity-schools in the nation; (as what is there so noble and useful, but some may object against it?) namely, that they made children proud and idle, and spoil them for servants; so that upon trial, seldom any of them are good for aught: the latter part of which complaint may, for aught I know, in some sense be true; for they are taught in their schools to abhor lying, and to lead a godly life. But of what use should such as these be to many masters? who would have such qualifications in a servant as are not, *totidem verbis*, the same with David's: "He that telleth not lies, shall not tarry in my sight: he that leadeth a godly life, shall not be my servant." For were it not for this sound and honest reason, one would be apt to think a blackguard boy or girl should not make much the worse servants, for having learnt to say their prayers and catechisms, and to write and read; and for being broken of what one may almost call their original sins,—their cursing, and swearing, and stealing, and lying.

It is known to have been by the method of constant catechising, that both the ancient Jews and first Christians were so firmly grounded in their religion: as the revival of this practice I believe was, in a great measure, owing to the speedy and wide propagation of the Reformed religion, at its first appearance in the world; and I doubt its standing at a stay, and the melancholy growth of atheism, infidelity, profaneness, Popery, schism, and heresy, to the too common neglect, or careless and heedless performance of it. Nor do I expect we should recover our ground, without the utmost diligence and application in this office, which I hope has begun to revive for some years last passed; whence we may likewise hope that a better race of men shall arise in the next generation, and, that whatever we may have done, our posterity shall serve the Lord. Γένοιτο.

Neither can I think we have discharged our consciences by catechising in Lent only; nay, I am sure of the contrary, and that we are obliged to do it, if we have no reasonable let or hinderance, by the Rubric and Canon before mentioned, at evening service on all Sundays and holidays; which, therefore, if I mistake not, was designed instead of a sermon. Nor yet, I doubt, have we done our duty till we have seen our children taught some larger Catechism, after they are perfect in the shorter. Archbishop Wake's is for men, not for children. I had before taught mine Bishop Beveridge's;

making them draw out the answers themselves, in a method which Mr. ——— knows. Though you will hardly get your adults, servants, &c., to learn and repeat either this or the other, unless you take your brother's method, whom I look upon to be one of the ablest Catechists in the nation.

VI. The next part of your office is administering the sacraments: that of baptism now, and assisting in the other, till you are regularly called yourself to the full celebration and administration of it.

As for baptism, I doubt not but you will perform it in so grave and solemn a manner as becomes so sacred an office; and hope you will bring the godfathers and godmothers, as your brother has done at Haxey, though I could never do it at Epworth, to repeat the responses. And yet something I have done, nor have the least apprehension that you should let them break through that good order which has cost me the biggest struggle I ever had since I came to the parish, in prevailing with the people to bring their children to church for public baptism, as their wives to be church'd; whereas both were commonly done before in their houses, where they had godfathers and godmothers, and the whole baptismal office, as they generally have it still in the Levels; though I would never administer it there in that manner. But in case of real necessity, (whereof you are the judge, and yet might not perhaps do much amiss if you threw in sometimes a grain of favour to quiet the fearful *puerpera*,) God forbid they should ever want private baptism, whether it be day or night, that they send for you. But then you will do what you can, and take the best vouchers you are able, for their bringing them to church to be received there soon afterwards, at the farthest when the mother is church'd; because, some will keep them an enormous while before they will do it, sometimes a year, or near, or more: as they also will commonly do before they get their children christened at all, either publicly or privately, and will bring such monsters of men-children to the font, as will almost break your arms, and with their manful voices disturb and alarm the whole congregation: for which, all such parents will deserve to be presented, if they will not be reformed or dissuaded from so ill a practice. The midwife, ———, who deserves a licence, though I doubt she has not one, is a decent, sensible woman, and I am sure will serve the church in this matter as far as she is able. There was a dispute about the place of churching women, which we have evidence has been in the same place, the pew where John Peck sits, for fifty or sixty years last passed; but I hope that dispute is now over. You will, I hope, keep them to the Rubric, in letting you know sometime the day before, when

they have a child to be baptized, be it to be done either Sunday or holiday ; (though you will indulge them as far as to do it likewise on prayer-days ;) that you may appoint whether it should be brought in the fore or afternoon. As for churchings, you will find many, especially of the poorer sort, will be for getting this over before the child is baptized ; and when the woman is once at liberty, notwithstanding their fair promises before, will drive the other sometimes world without end ; for their children have died unbaptized. I wish with all my heart you could break this bad custom : I desire you would consult your brother about it, whose advice and practice will, I know, have great weight with my people, when you plead with them for this, or any other necessary alteration. When you have any adults, you will prepare them for baptism, and then give me notice, who have had a general verbal licence from the Bishop to baptize them.

As for the other sacrament which you know we have, as your brother has, once a month, no better directions, I think, can be given, where they are practicable, than those which we had from our then Bishop Wake, in his Letters to his Clergy, *anno* 1711, p. 5 : “ After you have read the exhortation, the Sunday before, prescribed by the communion-book, to add the two first Rubrics of the same book ; and there expressly to admonish all such as intend to be partakers of the holy communion, to signify their names to the Curate the day before, as the Rubrics require, to the end that every Minister may know who they are that do customarily neglect this holy ordinance ; and also be the better enabled, by good advice and instruction, to prepare such as should need his assistance to come worthily to it ; and to advertise those whom for their open and notorious evil living they are forbid to admit, that they do not in anywise presume to come to the Lord’s table, till they have truly repented and amended ; of whom, if any are repelled, and cannot otherwise be reclaimed, an account is to be given to the Ordinary within fourteen days ;” as a list of those who altogether refuse to communicate, is, by Canon cxii., to be exhibited to the Bishop or his Chancellor.

There is a collection at the sacrament, at which I gave something myself, for example, more than from any conceived obligations ; though on both accounts to briefs. This sacrament money, when entered into the church-book, is kept in the box appointed for it, with three canonical locks and keys ; one of which I have in my own keeping. That money I have agreed shall be disposed, three parts to pay for the children at the charity-school, the fourth reserved in bank for such poor sick people as have no constant relief from the parish, and who come to the sacrament ; though I

understand by your brother it is all given for the charity-children at Haxey.

And now I am on the head of charity, there is a considerable sum, left by legacies, to be distributed in cloth to the poor every Christmas, wherein the Minister is, by will, concerned; though they have got a way, for some of these last years, of shutting him quite out of it, and ordering it how they please, even those who have nothing to do in particular with the disposal of it; which ought, I am sure, to be regulated, if we know how to do it. The register ought to be kept according to the seventieth Canon, and the christenings, &c., writ down every Sunday after morning or evening service: processions kept up every year, in Rogation-week, which might have prevented a great deal of loss to the parish and the Minister, if it had been constantly done formerly.

VII. Your last, and not the least difficult, task, is that of discipline, chiefly coercive, what we have left of it; as I think we have still more than we make use of. One main branch of which, and which I believe would go a great way, if duly and impartially executed, is that relating to the sacrament already mentioned. The others are presentments, excommunications, &c., for which you will have particular directions in your book of Articles, if you can persuade your Churchwardens to observe them, whom you will do well to remind of the twenty-sixth Canon, and to read it over to them; to prevent, if possible, their being guilty of the horrid sin of perjury. As likewise of the ninetieth Canon, "That they diligently see that all the parishioners resort to church, and not stay idling in the churchyard or porch," much less, surely, in the alehouse; though it would be well if you could keep your Churchwardens themselves out of them, and that even in the time of divine service. It has never been my custom to suffer any to be presented for antenuptial fornication, where the women held out to the seventh month; because I know there may be, and often has been, in the month a natural living burden. But as for others, either antenuptial or no-nuptial fornicators, or any of the same crew, they neither have had, nor shall expect, from me any favour. You may perhaps sometimes catch the Dissenters napping this way, as well as those whom they call the men of the world; but I never made any distinction between them and others, having brought them to public penance, from whence they found they were not screened by the Toleration. As for the rest, the Dissenters will live inoffensively and friendly with you, if you will let them alone, and not humour them so far as to dispute with them, which I did at my first coming; for they always outfaced me and outlunged me, and, at the end, we were just where we were at the beginning.

But there is another sort of discipline, which I think we may properly call lay-discipline, whereby, if I mistake not, all Clergymen are in some measure obliged to correct notorious offenders. This we have in the King's Proclamation against profaneness and immorality, and the Act against swearing, both enjoined to be read in the churches; and in the Acts of King James I., and King Charles II., against drunkenness and profanation of the Lord's day: which, doubtless, we may largely quote there, if we may not read them. This might have some good effect on our parishioners, especially if we always preached, at the same time, a warm and practical sermon on those subjects; for which I heartily wish there were less occasion.

And now to close this tedious and most unfashionable letter, (which I did not think at first would have been so long,) wherein I have, at some rate or other, run over all those heads which I at first proposed, with the truest kindness and concern for your welfare and prosperity in both worlds, and I hope for the glory of God: I entreat you, my dear and much-respected brother, that you would not throw these papers by, which, as worthless as they are, have cost me some weeks' pains in first writing, and more in transcribing them, without once or twice seriously reading and thinking them over. Do what good you can in the station wherein God has fixed you; prevent what evil: fret not yourself if you think you can do neither, though a man may possibly do more good than he knows or thinks of, towards which, I hope, we shall ere long have considerable mutual assistance by a society of the Clergy; as the forming of such societies was, I remember, recommended by Archbishop Tenison, in the year 99, to the Clergy of his diocese, as one of the most likely ways to promote the great ends of piety and religion. However, go on in the way of your duty, and remember who will be your exceeding great reward. Your reverend, pious, and worthy brother has often provoked me to, I hope, an honest and virtuous emulation; and may he do the same to you who have him so near you, and his instructive example ever before you eyes! You have some advantages which he had not, besides that extraordinary one, that he was born before you. I have, I think, marked the way fairly for you; and have not, I am sure, unless it be perfectly without design, in anything hitherto misled you, that way by which God has called us to glory and virtue, by pains and labour. You set out fairly, (if you can keep awhile from *impedimenta*,) with an healthy and strong body; with life, and youth, and vigour, and, I hope, as strong a mind. May there be no dispute between us three, as I hope there never will, but who shall run fastest and fairest; and if I am distanced, I will limp after you as fast as I can.

with such a weight. The prize is richly overworth our pains ; it is no less, as Ignatius (a greater than he) has told us, than *ἀφθαρσία, καὶ ζωὴ αἰώνιος* : and if we strive lawfully, steadily, persistingly, “when the chief Shepherd appears, we shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.” So heartily prays, wishes, hopes,

Your very affectionate friend and brother,

S. W.

THE FOUNDERY.

VOL. I.—PAGE 207.

THE following notices respecting the Foundry are selected from a periodical work which was published a few years ago :—

“The Government Foundry, for casting brass ordnance, was formerly situated in Moorfields. The process of casting the cannon was then an object of curiosity to the inhabitants of the metropolis ; many of whom, of all classes, frequently attended during the operation of pouring the melted metal into the moulds. The injured cannon which had been taken from the French in the successful campaigns of the Duke of Marlborough, amounting to a considerable number, had been placed before the Foundry, and in the adjacent artillery ground ; and it was determined, in 1716, to recast these cannon. On the day appointed for performing this work, a more than usual number of persons were assembled to view the process. Many of the nobility and several general officers were present ; for whose accommodation temporary galleries had been erected near the furnaces. Among the company then drawn together was Andrew Schalch, an intelligent young man, a native of Schaffhausen, in Switzerland, who was travelling for improvement : he was at the Foundry at an early hour ; and, having been permitted minutely to inspect the works, detected some humidity in the moulds, and immediately perceived the danger likely to arise from the pouring into them of hot metal in such a state. Schalch communicated his fears to Colonel Armstrong, the Surveyor-General of the Ordnance ; explained his reasons for believing that an explosion would take place ; and strongly urged him and the rest of the company to withdraw from the Foundry before the casting of the metal. The Colonel, having closely questioned Schalch on the subject, found him perfectly conversant with all the principles of the founder’s art ; and, being convinced of the good sense which dic-

tated his advice, quitted the Foundry, together with all those persons who could be induced to believe that there were any grounds for apprehension.

“The furnaces being opened, the fluid metal rushed into the moulds, the moisture in which was instantly converted into steam, and its expansive force acting upon the metal drove it out in all directions with extreme violence ; part of the roof was blown off, the galleries gave way, and a scene of much mischief and distress ensued. Many of the spectators had their limbs broken, most of the workmen were burnt in a dreadful manner, and several lives were lost.

“A few days afterwards an advertisement appeared in the newspapers, notifying, that if the young foreigner who foretold this explosion would call at the Ordnance Office, it might prove advantageous to both parties. Schalch, being informed, through a friend, of this intimation, lost no time in obeying the summons. Colonel Armstrong had then much further conversation with him on the subject ; and became by this means so well assured of his superior ability, that it was finally agreed to entrust Schalch with putting into execution the intention of Government to seek an eligible situation out of the metropolis, and within twelve miles thereof, to which the Royal Foundry should be removed. Schalch, after examining different places, at length fixed upon the rabbit-warren, at Woolwich, as suitable to his purpose ; and the erection of the works was left to his superintendence.

“The first specimens of artillery cast by Schalch were so much approved, that he was appointed Master Founder to the Board of Ordnance ; and this office he continued to hold during sixty years, assisted in the latter part of that term by his nephew Lewis Gaschlin. Twenty-five years ago, this nephew, then more than eighty years old, was still employed in the Arsenal as Principal Modeller for the Military Repository. Schalch died in 1776, at the advanced age of ninety, and is buried in Woolwich churchyard. Some of the largest mortars now remaining in the Arsenal were cast under his direction, and bear his name.

“It is well worthy of remark that the discernment, which did so much honour to Colonel Armstrong, was fully proved by the fact, that during the whole period in which Schalch superintended the casting of the ordnance at Woolwich, amidst operations attended with much hazard and difficulty, not one single accident occurred. This fact bears ample testimony to the skill, prudence, and watchful care of ‘the young foreigner,’ who owed his rise in life to the judicious and prompt application, at a critical moment, of the knowledge he had acquired.”

The building in Moorfields, which had been greatly shattered by the explosion, and afterwards vacated, was put into repair by the Wesleys, and was the first separate place of worship they ever opened. A dwelling-house was connected with it; a day-school; a room where the publications of the brothers were sold; and a large room where the society were accustomed to meet, and where the weekly meeting for intercession was held. The bell which was rung for the purpose of calling the people together to the preaching, at the early hour of five o'clock in the morning, is still in existence, being attached to the school at Friars'-Mount, London.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH OF MRS. HANNAH RICHARDSON. BY THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY, M.A.

VOL. I.—PAGE 275.

BRISTOL, Saturday, April 19th, 1741. I was hastily called to one that was dying. It was Hannah Richardson, a young woman, who had long been a sincere mourner for Christ, a true Hannah, a woman of a sorrowful spirit. God had awakened and drawn her from her infancy; and she heartily laboured to establish her own righteousness, seeking acceptance (as we did all) “not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.”

When it pleased God to send the Gospel of his free grace to this city, she gladly parted with her own righteousness, and submitted herself to the righteousness of God. She was a constant hearer of his word, but received no benefit by it; no comfort, no peace, no life. Yet she continued waiting for several months, till it pleased our Lord, who sends by whom He will send, to make use of my ministry, and apply the word of reconciliation to her soul. Jesus gave her a token for good, and she went home to her house justified. She rejoiced in God her Saviour, and testified, “In Him I have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of my sins.”

But, alas! the Comforter was as a guest that tarrieth but a day. She soon gave place to the reasoning devil, who asked, “How can those things be? How can you be justified, so vile a sinner as you? You only deceive yourself! Hath God for Christ’s sake forgiven you? He hath surely not forgiven you.” By such suggestions he well-nigh tore away her shield. All the comfort of her faith, all her peace and joy in believing, he did entirely spoil her of; God so permitting it, to try her, and prove her, and show her

what was in her heart, that He might do her good in her latter end. He hid his face from her, and she was troubled. "I will allure her," said God, "and bring her into the wilderness." Here she long wandered out of the way, in barren and dry land, where no water was. The poor and needy sought water, and there was none, and her tongue failed for thirst. She could truly say, with the Prophet, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself." Or, with the patient man, "Behold, I go forward, but He is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive Him; on the left hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him; He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him." Her bones were smitten asunder, as with a sword, while the enemy said unto her, "Where is now thy God? Where is now thy faith? Thou art a thousand times worse than ever."

So indeed she seemed to herself, when sin appeared sin. God was now uncovering her heart, and convincing her of original sin. The old man of sin was more and more revealed, till at last she saw that her inward parts were very wickedness, and every imagination of the thoughts of her heart only evil continually. She had no power to pray or praise, or so much as to think one good thought; and, at the same time, was so torn and distracted with doubts and fears, that she despaired even of life. That thought above all tormented her, "What would become of me, if I should die in this darkness? Without holiness no one shall see the Lord." At other times she had a faint persuasion that God would finish his work before He called her hence.

She durst not say she had faith, or any interest in Christ; and yet she could not give it up. One little spark of hope lay at the very bottom of her heart; which was Christ's hold of her. He would not quit his purchase, or let her go.

Even this was often a great trouble to her,—that she could not fear death as formerly; for this fear was entirely cast out, the first moment she was sensible of her justification. And whenever she had the least comfort or peace, she started back, as it were, and feared to take hold on it, suspecting that she was fallen asleep again, and resting without Christ. She went mourning all the day long, and refused to be comforted, because He was not.

For many days and months she walked on still in darkness, and had no light; but against hope believed in hope; staggering oftentimes, but not falling, through unbelief. Still she bore up under her continual fears of being a castaway. She waited in a constant use of all the means of grace, never missed the communion, or hearing the word; though all was torment to her, for she never found benefit: nothing, she said, affected her; there was none so wicked

as her. I am a witness to her many complaints and wailings. Yet she persisted with a glorious obstinacy; and followed on to know the Lord, walking in all his commandments and ordinances blameless. She went on steadily in the way of her duty, never intermitting it on account of her inward conflicts. Not slothful in business, but working almost continually with her own hands. Most strict was she, and unblamable in all her relative duties, and in all manner of conversation. Those who lived with her never heard a light and trifling word come out of her mouth. She did not sit still, till she should be pure in heart, but redeemed the time, and bought up every opportunity of doing good. To do good she never forgot; but spoke to all, and warned all, both children and grown persons, as God delivered them into her hands. She was exceeding tender-hearted towards the sick, whether in body or soul. She could not rejoice with those that rejoiced; but she wept with those that wept, and encouraged them to wait upon God, who hid his face from her, to be never weary in well-doing; for in the end, said she, they would reap if they fainted not.

See here a pattern of true mourning! A spectacle for men and angels! A soul standing up under the intolerable weight of original sin! Troubled on every side; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted by sin, the world, and the devil, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; walking on as evenly under that load of darkness, as if she had been in the broad light of God's countenance. Whosoever thou art that seekest Christ sorrowing, "go thou and do likewise."

In this agony she continued, till it pleased God to visit her with her last sickness. For the two or three first days she could not be kept from the word; but was then constrained to take her bed. She had early notice of her departure, and told one of her band that she should not recover. She had expressed great earnestness to see me, but I could not visit her till the Thursday following. I then found her, to her own sense and feeling, in utter despair. "I am dying," she cried, "without pardon, without a Saviour, without hope." I prayed in full assurance of faith, and then testified the love of Christ to her, a lost sinner; declaring to her that He would fulfil in her the work of faith with power. "My soul for yours," I told her, "if you depart hence before your eyes have seen his salvation. 'Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry.' The word of our God shall stand for ever. Every one that seeketh findeth. Fear not: behold, He comes quickly; and one moment of his presence will make you abundant amends for all the pain of absence."

When I was gone, her suffering rather increased, and Satan raged

the more. The lion tore her, as it were, to pieces : she was in a mighty conflict, and said, "None knows what I have gone through in this sickness ; my enemy triumphs over me ; it is the hour of darkness ; it is more than I am able to bear."

The captive exile hasteneth that she may be loosed, and that she should not die in the pit, nor that her bread should fail. This trial was the severest of all. "The devil," she said, "besets me sorely : I shall never hold out ; I shall perish at last ; but if I am lost, I am content : though I go down to hell, let but Christ be with me, and I will go without fear." Here she seemed to be strengthened to endure a greater agony. She drank of the cup which her Lord drank of, and had fellowship in those sufferings which made Him cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me !" To complete her distress, the angel of death came ! She was struck and changed on a sudden, so that one came and told me she was just dying. Then, as man would judge, she let go her hold of God ; and the spirit failed before Him, and the soul which He had made.

In this dreadful moment, this last extremity, this deepest distress the human soul is capable of, the Comforter came. The Lord, her Saviour, came suddenly to his temple. As lightning shineth from one end of the heaven unto the other, so was the coming of the Son of man. He took away the veil from her heart, and revealed himself in her in a manner the world knoweth not of. She broke out, "Now I know that Christ died for me. He hath washed me from all my sins in his precious blood. I have eternal life abiding in me."

Soon after she had found redemption, I called and saw her in full triumph of faith. O how unlike what she was in my last visit ! "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature." This is the work which despisers will not believe, though a man declare it unto them. Her soul was passed from death unto life ; an hidden, everlasting life in God. After we had prayed she witnessed a good confession. "I believe in Jesus Christ ; I feel the truth of these words of his, 'I am the resurrection and the life.' I have no fear, no doubt, no trouble. Your words were true : He has fulfilled his promise."

Never did I behold a soul so filled. Some of her words were, "Now indeed He hath made me amends for my waiting. Blessed be God, all my pain is nothing ! I have suffered nothing ! I smell the sweet odour of the name of Jesus. His smell is as the smell of Lebanon. Who is so sweet as my beloved ? 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.' I love Jesus Christ with all my heart. I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ. But his will be done. I have no will of my own." While I was saying, "Doubt not, but be

‘persuaded that neither life nor death, nor things present, nor things——,’” she interrupted me with, “No, no; I cannot doubt, although I did doubt. I cannot fear now: perfect love hath cast out fear. I have full redemption in the blood of Jesus.”

To her sisters she had said before I came, “Heaven is open! I see Jesus Christ with all his angels and saints in white; and I am joined to them. I shall never be parted more. I see what I cannot utter or express! Cannot you see Jesus Christ? There, there He stands, ready to receive you all! O do not doubt of the love of Jesus: look on me! If He has taken me into his bosom, who need despair? Fear not, fear not. He is loving unto every man. I believe Christ died for all.”

Her first words after I left her were, “Liberty! liberty! This is the glorious liberty of the sons of God! I know it, I see it, I feel it. Believe, believe there is such a liberty, and He will give it you. I am sanctified wholly, spirit, soul, and body.”

She had spent the time while I was absent in fervent prayer; and at my third visit told me, “I have whatsoever I ask. I have asked life for my mother and sisters, and have obtained it.” I took the opportunity, and put her upon praying for the peace of Jerusalem, for union, and for the Preachers of reprobation, that God might open their eyes; for my brother, and for the lambs of this fold, that they might not be turned out of the way.

The fourth time I came to see her they told me she had been in a great conflict; oftentimes repeating, “I will wrestle with thee for a blessing. I will not let thee go unless thou bless him. Bless that soul. Give him the thing I ask.” At last she said, “Now I am more than conqueror. I have the petitions I ask: not one is unanswered.”

To me she said, “I have power with God and with man, and have prevailed.”

From expounding at the malt-room, I returned the last time, and found her ready for the Bridegroom: her every word was full of power, and life, and love. It was the Spirit of her Father which spoke in her. She had been wrestling again, and making intercession for the saints and all mankind; particularly her own Church and nation. Some of her words were: “Thy judgments are abroad in the earth: O that the inhabitants of this land may learn righteousness! Grant me, sweet Jesus, that they may repent and live.” She prayed fervently for the society, that they might abide in the word, keep close together, and be all of one heart and mind. “There is a curse upon them,” said she, “a curse of unthankfulness; but I have prayed my dear Lord to remove it, and He will remove it.”

When one of her sisters came to see her, who was deeply mourning for Christ, she laboured much to comfort her; bade her look at her, so miserable and hopeless an unbeliever lately; and assured her the Comforter should quickly come. At the sight of her sister's tears, O how sweetly did she lament over her! I never saw so much sympathy! The spirit in her mourned like a turtle-dove, and made intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered.

All the time of her sickness she never once complained or showed the least sensibility of pain, or that she had any body at all. When one asked her if she did not feel her pains, being then in strong convulsions, she answered, "My pain is great; but I do not feel it. It does not trouble me: I choose it rather than ease; for my Lord chooses it. Pain or ease, life or death, it is all one. The Spirit beareth witness with my spirit, that I am a child of God: I have the earnest of mine inheritance in my heart. I have no will. I am made perfect in love."

I asked, whether that peace which she tasted above a year ago was the same she now enjoyed. She answered, "It was of the same kind, in the lowest or first degree. It surely was justification."

After I went she said, "This day shall I be with Him in paradise. Within four-and-twenty hours I shall be with my beloved."

She continued all night in the labour of love, making powerful supplication for all men. About three on Sunday morning she said, "It is finished." All sufferings even for others ceased from that moment, and she began the new song which shall never end. Her whole employment now was the same with theirs to whom she was going, the innumerable company of angels, the church of the first-born. She sang to the harper's harp, without any intermission, till two in the afternoon: even while they were giving her cordials she sang. Her hope was full of immortality; her looks, of heaven; till, with smiles of triumph, she resigned her spirit into the hands of her dear Redeemer. Death wanted all its pomp and circumstances of horror. She went away without any agony, or sigh, or groan. She only rested, and sweetly fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

THE GWYNNE FAMILY.

VOL. I.—PAGE 514.

THE following memoranda respecting the Gwynne family are copied from a document in the hand-writing of Mrs. Charles Wesley :—

“ Father and mother were married on the 27th of July, 1716 ; he being twenty-five years of age, and she twenty-one.

“ 1. Brother Howell Gwynne was born on the 16th of April, 1718. He married Lady Rudd, by whom he has one son.

“ 2. Sister Mary Gwynne was born on the 24th of January, 1719–20. She married Captain Edward Baldwyn, of Diddlebury-Hall, in Salop.

“ 3. Brother Marmaduke was born on the 10th of September, 1722. He married Miss Howell, of Glamorganshire ; he being nineteen years of age, and she eighteen. They had four children ; but Roderick Gwynne died at three years and a half old. Two girls and a boy are living.

“ 4. Sister Rebecca Gwynne was born on Nov. 23d, 1724.

“ 5. Sarah Gwynne was born on Wednesday, Oct. 12th, 1726 ; and married the Rev. Charles Wesley, on the 8th of April, 1749.

“ 6. Sister Joan Gwynne was born on Sept. 14th, 1728.

“ 7. Sister Elizabeth Gwynne was born on the 19th of October, 1730. She was married to Mr. James Waller, (a lace merchant in London,) at Ludlow, on the 4th of December, 1750, by Mr. Charles Wesley.

“ 8. Sister Margaret Gwynne was born on the 17th of December, 1733 ; and departed this life on Monday, July 13th, 1752, (in London,) aged eighteen years.

“ 9. Brother Roderick Gwynne was born on the 11th of August, 1735.”

According to the register of Llanleouvel, the parish in which Garth is situated, Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq., the father of Mrs. Charles Wesley, was buried on the 13th of April, 1769 ; and his widow, the mother of Mrs. Wesley, on the 3d of January following ; so that both her parents were dead when she removed, with the rest of the family, from Bristol to London.

LETTER OF CHARLES SKELTON.

VOL. II.—PAGE 45.

THE following letter was inserted in the second volume of the "Arminian Magazine." It shows of what spirit Mr. Skelton was when he was an Itinerant Preacher. The remark at the end of it was made by Mr. Wesley, to whom the letter was most probably addressed.

"Bristol, April 8th, 1749. Rev. Sir,—I came to Bristol this day, and received yours; and, as you desire it, will lay all the affair before you.

"February 20th, being in London, I went up into my room to sit and read. As I was sitting, it came into my mind, that there were six malefactors to be executed that day; and it was exceedingly impressed upon me to go and see them executed. But I thought it was only curiosity; so I rested myself contented. In a few moments it was so much the more impressed upon my mind, that go I must. I then went down stairs, and asked of our brother Salthouse, whether there was a horse in the stable, that I might go and see the men executed. He answered, 'There is; but if you would be advised by me, do not ride: it is dangerous.' I then thought I would not go; so went into my room again, and sat down to read. But before I had sat half an hour I was quite uneasy, and found that go I must. I went down, and put on my great coat. One asked me, where I was going: I told her, to see the men. She asked, how far I would go: I told her, only to Holborn. When I came to Snow-hill, three had passed by in a cart; and the other three were just coming, drawn upon a sledge. Two of the three were praying to the Virgin Mary. They passed by, with several horse following them, and thousands of foot. I then turned to go home, when it came into my mind exceeding strong, 'If the Scriptures are of God, those poor men can never enter into his kingdom; seeing there is no other name given whereby man can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ.' And again, 'How can they hear without a Preacher?' I looked back, but the men were quite gone out of my sight. I then thought, What can I or any man do for them in such a circumstance, but pray for them? and I turned again to go towards home. But I had not taken above three or four steps, till it was strongly impressed upon my mind to follow them. But I thought, How is it possible that I can get at them, seeing there are so many thousands of people between them and me? The

more I reasoned, the more I was lost, till the Lord almost dragged me to it. At last I turned, and began to run. The people all opened wherever I came ; so that my way was entirely free. I do not know that I bade one soul stand by ; but as God opened the way, so I went through thousands of foot, and hundreds of horse. I came up to the men at the upper-end of Holborn. When I came up to them, the same two were praying to the Virgin Mary, and likewise to the other saints. I spoke to them in the presence of God, and told them, that not all the saints in heaven would avail them ; but unless Christ saved them, they must perish. I told them, that there was no other name given whereby they could be saved but the name of Jesus Christ. I then proved to them, that Christ was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever ; and that if they would now cry to Jesus for mercy, mercy and salvation were nigh them. The word came like daggers to their hearts, and the arrows of God stuck fast within them. They let their books drop out of their hands, and their cry was, ‘Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon us ! One drop, Lord Jesus, one drop of thy most precious blood shall soften and break our hearts in pieces !’ The waters of repentance ran like rivers down their cheeks ; their hearts bursting within them. The Lord broke in upon one of them, and filled him with his love. At the same time he received the gift of prayer ; and prayed the most evangelically I ever heard. When the other had seen what God had done for his soul, it made him cry out so much the more, ‘Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy upon me ! Lord, save me, or I perish !’ He then arose, and got round the other to get at me, and cried, ‘O dear, dear Sir, is there mercy for me ?’ I insisted upon the promise, that there is, even for you, the chief of sinners. He then flung himself back, and cried out amain, in vehemence of spirit, ‘Lord, save me, or I am damned ! O God, break my heart that is like a rock. Now, now, O Lord, let me feel one drop of the blood of Jesus.’ While he was thus wrestling, the Lord broke his heart in pieces ; and immediately tears of joy ran from his eyes like a fountain : so that both could now rejoice in God their Saviour.

“When we came to the gallows, the other three men waited in the cart for the hangman to come up, who was with us. He went up into the cart to tie them up ; and while he was tying them, I went to prayer with the three that I was with. I then stood up on the side of the sledge, in the midst of many thousand souls. Many took off their hats while I was at prayer ; and at the end of every sentence did say such hearty Amens, that the place echoed with the sound. Then the hangman came and took them out of the sledge, to tie them up with the other three. While he was doing this, I

was talking to the other man that was on the sledge. He was sixty years of age, but utterly unconcerned. When all their ropes were tied, the Ordinary of Newgate read the form of words ; and orders were given, that they should draw down their caps. Those two men looked round upon the people smiling, and then lifted up their hearts, and said, ‘Now, O Lord, into thy hands do we commit our spirits.’

“O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory ! I am, Rev. Sir,

“Your obedient son in the Gospel,
“CHARLES SKELTON.”

Did God design, that this light should be hid under a bushel ? in a little, obscure, Dissenting meeting-house ?

AN EPISTLE TO THE REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY, BY
CHARLES WESLEY, PRESBYTER OF THE CHURCH OF
ENGLAND.

PRINTED IN 1755, AND REPRINTED IN 1785.

VOL. II.—PAGE 81.

My first and last unalienable friend,
A brother's thoughts with due regard attend,
A brother, still as thy own soul beloved,
Who speak to learn, and write to be reprov'd :
Far from the factious, undiscerning crowd,
Distress'd, I fly to thee, and think aloud ;
I tell thee, wise and faithful as thou art,
The fears and sorrows of a burden'd heart,
The workings of (a blind or heavenly ?) zeal,
And all my fondness for the Church I tell,
The Church, whose cause I serve, whose faith approve,
Whose altars reverence, and whose name I love.

But does she still exist in more than sound ?
The Church—alas ! where is she to be found ?
Not in the men, however dignified,
Who would her creeds repeal, her laws deride,
Her prayers expunge, her Articles disown,
And thrust the filial Godhead from his throne.
Vainest of all their anti-Christian plea,
Who cry, “The temple of the Lord are we !”
“We have the Church, nor will we quit our hold ;”
Their hold of what ? the altar ? or the gold ?

The altars theirs, who will not light the fire ;
 Who spurn the labour, but accept the hire,
 Who, not for souls, but their own bodies, care,
 And leave to underlings the task of prayer ?
 As justly might our christen'd Heathens claim,
 Thieves, drunkards, whoremongers, the sacred name ;
 Or rabble rout succeed in their endeavour,
 With, " High Church, and Sacheverel for ever ! "
 As Arians be for orthodox allow'd,
 For saints, the sensual, covetous, and proud,
 And Satan's synagogue for the true church of God !

Then let the zealous orthodox appear,
 And challenge the contested character :
 Those who renounce the whole Dissenting tribe,
 Creeds, Articles, and Liturgy subscribe ;
 Their parish church who never once have miss'd,
 At schism rail, and hate a Methodist ;
 " The company of faithful souls " are these,
 Who strive to 'stablish their own righteousness,
 But count the faith divine a madman's dream ?
 Howe'er they to themselves may pillars seem,
 Of Christ, and of his church, they make no part ;
 They never knew the Saviour in their heart.

But those who in their heart have Jesus known,
 Believers justified by faith alone,
 Shall we not them the faithful people own ?
 In whom the power of godliness is seen,
 Must we not grant the Methodists the men ?
 No ; though we granted them from schism free,
 From wild enthusiastic heresy,
 From every wilful crime, and moral blot,
 Yet still the Methodists the church are not ;
 A single faculty is not the soul,
 A limb the body, or a part the whole.

Whom, then, when every vain pretender's cast,
 With truth may we account the church at last ?
 " All who have felt, deliver'd from above,
 The holy faith that works by humble love ;
 All that in pure religious worship join,
 Led by the Spirit, and the word divine,
 Duly the Christian mysteries partake,
 And bow to Governors for conscience' sake : "
 In these the Church of England I descry,
 And vow with these alone to live and die.

Yet while I warmly for her faith contend,
 Shall I her blots and blemishes defend ?

Inventions added in a fatal hour,
 Human appendages of pomp and power ;
 Whatever shines in outward grandeur great,
 I give it up,—a creature of the State.
 Wide of the Church, as hell from heaven is wide,
 The blaze of riches, and the glare of pride,
 The vain desire to be entitled, “ Lord,”
 The worldly kingdom, and the princely sword.

But should the bold usurping spirit dare
 Still higher climb, and sit in Moses’ chair,
 Power o’er my faith and conscience to maintain,
 Shall I submit, and suffer it to reign ?
 Call it the Church, and darkness put for light,
 Falsehood with truth confound, and wrong with right ?
 No ; I dispute the evil’s haughty claim,
 The spirit of the world be still its name ;
 Whatever call’d by man, ’tis purely evil,
 ’Tis Babel, antichrist, and Pope, and devil !

Nor would I e’er disgrace the Church’s cause
 By penal edicts, and compulsive laws,
 (Should wicked powers, as formerly, prevail
 To’ exclude her choicest children from her pale,)
 Or force my brethren in her forms to join,
 As every jot and tittle were divine,
 As all her orders on the Mount were given,
 And copied from the hierarchy of heaven.
 Let others for the shape and colour fight
 Of garments short or long, or black or white ;
 Or fairly match’d in furious battle join
 For and against the sponsors and the sign ;
 Copes, hoods, and surplices the Church miscall,
 And fiercely run their heads against the wall :
 Far different care is mine ; o’er earth to see
 Diffused her true essential piety,
 To see her lift again her languid head,
 Her lovely face from every wrinkle freed,
 Clad in the simple, pure, primeval dress,
 And beauteous with internal holiness,
 Wash’d by the Spirit and the Word from sin,
 Fair without spot, and glorious all within.

Alas ! how distant now, how desolate,
 Our fallen Zion, in her captive state !
 Deserted by her friends, and laugh’d to scorn,
 By inbred foes and bosom vipers torn,
 With grief I mark their rancorous despite ;
 With horror hear the clam’rous Edomite ;
 “ Down with her to the ground,” who fiercely cries,
 “ No more to lift her head, no more to rise !

Down with her to the pit, to Tophet doom
 A Church emerging from the dregs of Rome !
 Can there in such a Church salvation be ?
 Can any good come out of Popery ? ”
 Ye moderate Dissenters,—come and see !

See us, when from the Papal fire we came,
 Ye frozen sects, and warm you at the flame,
 Where for the truth our host of martyrs stood,
 And clapp'd their hands, and seal'd it with their blood !
 Behold Elijah's fiery steeds appear,
 Discern the chariot of *our* Israel near !
 That flaming car, for whom doth it come down ?
 The spouse of Christ ? or whore of Babylon ?
 For martyrs, by the scarlet whore pursued
 Through racks and fires into the arms of God.
 These are the Church of Christ, by torture driven
 To thrones triumphant with their friends in heaven ;
 The Church of Christ, (let all the nations own,)
 The Church of Christ *and England*—is but one !

Yet vainly of our ancestors we boast,
 We who their faith and purity have lost,
 Degenerate branches from ■ noble seed,
 Corrupt, apostatized, and doubly dead :
 Will God in such a Church his work revive ?
 It cannot be that these dry bones should live.

But who to teach Almighty Grace shall dare ?
 How far to suffer, and how long to spare ?
 Shall man's bold hand our candlestick remove,
 Or cut us off from our Redeemer's love ?
 Shall man presume to say ?—‘ There is no hope :
 God *must* forsake, for *we* have given her up :
 To save ■ Church so near the gates of hell,
 This is a thing—with God impossible ! ”

And yet this thing impossible is done,
 The Lord *hath* made his power and mercy known,
 Strangely revived our long-forgotten hope,
 And brought out of their graves his people up.
 Soon as we prophesied in Jesu's name,
 The noise, the shaking, and the Spirit came !
 The bones spontaneous to each other cleaved,
 The dead in sin his powerful word received,
 And felt the quick'ning breath of God, and lived.
 Dead souls, to all the life of faith restored,
 (The house of Israel now,) confess the Lord,
 His people and his Church out of their graves
 They rise and testify that Jesus saves ;

That Jesus gives the multiplied increase,
 While one becomes a thousand witnesses.
 Nor can it seem to souls already freed
 Incredible, that God should wake the dead,
 Should farther still exert his saving power,
 And call, and quicken twice ten thousand more,
 Till our whole Church a mighty host becomes,
 And owns the Lord, the opener of their tombs.

Servant of God, my yoke-fellow and friend,
 If God by *us* to the *dry bones* could send,
 By *us* out of their graves his people raise,
 By *us* display the wonders of his grace,
 Why should we doubt his zeal to carry on
 By abler instruments the work begun,
 To build our temple that in ruins lay,
 And re-convert a nation in ■ day,
 To bring our Sion forth, as gold refined,
 With all his saints in closest union join'd,
 A friend, a nursing-mother to mankind?

Surely the time is come for God to rise,
 And turn upon our Church his glorious eyes ;
 To show her all the riches of his grace,
 And make her throughout all the earth a praise.
 For O ! his servants think upon her stones,
 And in their hearts his pleading Spirit groans.
 It pitieth them to see her in the dust,
 Her lamp extinguish'd, and her Gospel lost ;
 Lost, till the Lord, the great Restorer, came ;
 Extinguish'd, till his breath revived the flame ;
 His arm descending lifted up the sign,
 His light appearing bade her rise and shine ;
 Bade her glad children bless the heavenly ray,
 And shout the prospect of a Gospel-day.

Meanest and least of all her sons, may I
 Unite with theirs my faith and sympathy !
 Meanest and least, yet can I never rest,
 Or quench the flame enkindled in my breast :
 Whether a spark of nature's fond desire,
 That warms my heart, and sets my soul on fire ;
 Or a pure ray from yon bright throne above,
 That melts my yearning bowels into love ;
 Even as life, it still remains the same,
 My fervent zeal for our Jerusalem ;
 Stronger than death, and permanent as true,
 And purer love, it seems, than nature ever knew.

For her, whom her apostate sons despise,
 I offer up my life in sacrifice ;

My life in cherishing a parent spend,
 Fond of my charge, and faithful to the end :
 Not by the bonds of sordid interest tied,
 Not gain'd by wealth or honours to her side ;
 But by a *double birth* her servant born ;
 Vile for her sake, exposed to general scorn,
 Thrust out as from her pale, I gladly roam,
 Banish myself to bring her wanderers home.
 While the lost sheep of Israel's house I seek,
 By bigots branded for a schismatic ;
 By real schismatics disown'd, decried,
 As a blind bigot on the Church's side ;
 Yet well content, so I my love may show,
 My friendly love, to be esteem'd her foe ;
 Foe to her order, governors, and rules,
 The song of drunkards, and the sport of fools ;
 Or, what my soul doth as hell-fire reject,
 A Pope, a Count, and leader of a sect.

Partner of my reproach, who justly claim
 The larger portion of the glorious shame,
 My pattern in the work and cause divine,
 Say, is thy heart as bigoted as mine ?
 Wilt thou with me in the old Church remain,
 And share her weal or woe, her loss, her gain ;
 Spend in her service thy last drop of blood,
 And die, to build the temple of our God ?

Thy answer is in more than words express'd,
 I read it through the window in thy breast ;
 In every action of thy life I see
 Thy faithful love and filial piety.
 To save a sinking Church, thou dost not spare
 Thyself, but lavish all thy life for her :
 For Zion's sake thou wilt not hold thy peace,
 That she may grow, impatient to decrease ;
 To rush into thy grave, that she may rise,
 And mount with all her children to the skies.

What then remains for us on earth to do,
 But labour on with Jesus in our view ?
 Who bids us kindly for his patients care,
 Calls us the burden of his Church to bear ;
 To feed his flock, and nothing seek beside,
 And nothing know, but Jesus crucified.

When first sent forth to minister the word,
 Say, did we preach ourselves, or Christ the Lord ?
 Was it our aim disciples to collect,
 To raise a party, or to found a sect ?

No ; but to spread the power of Jesu's name,
 Repair the walls of our Jerusalem,
 Revive the piety of ancient days,
 And fill the earth with our Redeemer's praise.

Still let us steadily pursue our end,
 And only for the faith divine contend ;
 Superior to the charms of power and fame,
 Persist through life, invariably the same :
 And if indulged our hearts' desire to see,
 Jerusalem, in full prosperity,
 To pristine faith and purity restored,
 How shall we bless our good redeeming Lord ;
 Gladly into his hands our children give,
 Securely in their mother's bosom leave ;
 With calm delight accept our late release,
 Resign our charge to God, and then depart in peace !

AN ELEGY ON THE REV. GEORGE WHITEFIELD, M.A., WHO
 DIED SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1770, IN THE FIFTY-SIXTH YEAR
 OF HIS AGE. BY CHARLES WESLEY, M.A., PRESBYTER
 OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

VOL. II.—PAGE 245.

AND is my WHITEFIELD enter'd into rest ?
 With sudden death, with sudden glory, blest ?
 Left for a few sad moments here behind,
 I bear his image on my faithful mind ;
 To future times the fair example tell
 Of one who lived, of one who died, so well ;
 Pay the last office of fraternal love,
 And then embrace my happier friend above.

O thou who didst in our degenerate days
 This chosen vessel for thy glory raise,
 My heart with my companion's zeal inspire,
 And touch *my* lips with the celestial fire,
 That while thy servant's labours I record,
 Sinners may see and magnify his Lord,
 Bow to the saving Name, and thankful own
 The good on earth perform'd is wrought by God alone.

His sovereign grace vouchsafed a worm to choose,
 The vessel fitting for the Master's use :

God from the womb set for himself apart
 A Pastor fashion'd after his own heart ;
 Infused the infant wish, the warm desire,
 To minister like that angelic quire,
 And bade his simple soul to heaven aspire.

Awed and delighted with a God unknown,
 By glimpses of his face led gently on,
 The powerful, sweet attraction he pursued,
 And fear'd the crowd, and sigh'd for solitude ;
 His sins and wants in secret to declare,
 Or wait for blessings in the house of prayer,
 Devotion by the altar-fire to raise,
 And join the first-born church in solemn songs of praise.

But now the Lord, who sends by whom He will,
 Ready his own great purpose to fulfil,
 Inclined the creature's heart as passive clay,
 And pointed out his providential way
 To learning's seats, for piety design'd,
 For knowledge sound, with pure religion join'd,
 Schools of the Prophets' sons, and well employ'd,
 When training servants for the courts of God.

'Twas there he dared his fathers' God pursue,
 Associating with the derided few,
 (Who newly started in the Christian race,
 Were blindly following after righteousness,
 Outcasts of men, and fools for Jesus' sake !)
 He long'd their glorious scandal to partake,
 Courageously took up the shameful cross,
 And, suffering all things in the Saviour's cause,
 Vow'd to renounce the world, himself deny,
 And following on with them, with them to live and die.

Can I the memorable day forget,
 When first we by divine appointment met ?
 Where undisturb'd the thoughtful student roves,
 In search of truth, through academic groves,
 A modest, pensive youth, who mused alone,
 Industrious the frequented path to shun,
 An Israelite without disguise or art,
 I saw, I loved, I clasp'd him to my heart,
 A stranger as my bosom-friend caress'd,
 And unawares received an angel-guest.

Mark'd for an angel of the church below,
 Must he not first severe temptation know,
 Fly from the flaming mount with guilty awe,
 And quake to hear the thunders of the law,

The' accuser's cruel buffetings sustain,
 Still of unconquerable sin complain,
 With cries, and tears that seem'd to flow in vain?
 Long in the fire, long in the desert tried,
 He daily languish'd, and he daily died ;
 Long by the spirit of fear in prison bound,
 Groan'd for relief, yet no deliverance found ;
 Till quite forsaken both of man and God,
 And fainting underneath corruption's load,
 His fastings, prayers, and struggles he gave o'er,
 Sunk in despair, and gasp'd for help no more.

Then in the last extreme of hopeless grief,
 Jesus appear'd, and help'd his unbelief,
 Infused the faith which did his sins remove,
 Assured his heart of God's forgiving love,
 And fill'd with glorious joy, the joy of saints above.

Who but the souls that savingly believe,
 The raptures of a faithful soul conceive?
 The joy unspeakable, the love unknown,
 The peace he felt, is understood by none,
 By none but those who know their sins forgiven,
 Through God the Holy Ghost come down from heaven.

Born of the Spirit now, divinely led,
 He hastes in his dear Saviour's steps to tread,
 Eager his faith's sincerity to prove
 By all the works of piety and love ;
 Fruits of repentance first, and legal fear,
 They now the genuine marks of grace appear,
 Their own superior principle maintain,
 And justify his faith to God and man ;
 While listening to forlorn affliction's cries,
 Swift to assist on wings of love he flies,
 Help to the sick and needy prisoners gives,
 And more than their external wants relieves ;
 Alarms the souls that sleep secure in sin,
 Till urged the one great business they begin,
 Instructs them how to 'scape the judgment nigh,
 " Ye must be born again, or dead for ever die ! "

Nor let the scrup'lous sons of Levi fear
 He thus invades the sacred character :
 Thus every candidate should first be tried,
 In doing good, in Jesu's steps abide,
 Then exercise aright the Deacon's powers,
 Son to his church, as Whitefield was to ours.

Moved by the Holy Ghost to minister,
 And serve his altar, in the house of prayer,

Though long resolved for God alone to live,
 The outward call He trembled to receive,
 Shrunk from the awful charge, so well prepared,
 The gift by apostolic hands conferr'd,
 And cried, with deep, unfeign'd humility,
 "Send, Lord, by whom thou wilt, but send not me."

Yet soon he bows before the will divine,
 Clearly demonstrating his own design,
 Call'd by a Prelate good, no more delays
 To' accept with awe the consecrating grace,
 And offers up, through the Redeemer's blood,
 His body, spirit, soul, a sacrifice to God.

He now begins, from every weight set free,
 To make full trial of his ministry,
 Breaks forth on every side, and runs and flies,
 Like kindling flames that from the stubble rise,
 Where'er the ministerial Spirit leads,
 From house to house the heavenly fire he spreads,
 Ranges through all the city-lanes and streets,
 And seizes every prodigal he meets.

Who shall the will and work divine oppose?
 His strength with his increasing labour grows:
 Workman and work the' Almighty hath prepared,
 And, sent of God, the servant must be heard,
 Rush through the opening door, on sinners call,
 Proclaim the truth, and offer Christ to all.
 "Sound an alarm, the Gospel-trumpet blow,
 Let all their time of visitation know;
 The Saviour comes!" (you hear his herald cry,)
 "Go forth, and meet the Friend of sinners nigh!"
 Roused from the sleep of death, a countless crowd
 (Whose hearts like trees before the wind are bow'd,
 As a thick cloud, that darkens all the sky,
 As flocking doves, that to their windows fly)
 Press to the hallow'd courts with eager strife,
 Catch the convincing word, and hear for life,
 Parties and sects their endless feuds forget,
 And fall and tremble at the Preacher's feet;
 Prick'd at the heart, with one consent inquire,
 "What must we do to' escape the never-dying fire?"

Made apt to teach, he points them out the way,
 And willing multitudes the truth obey;
 He lets his light on all impartial shine,
 And strenuously asserts the birth divine;
 The Spirit freely given to all who claim
 The promised Comforter in Jesu's name;

The pardon bought so dear, by grace bestow'd,
Received through faith in the atoning blood.
While yet he speaks, the Lord himself comes down,
Applies, and proves the gracious word his own,
The Holy Ghost to thirsty souls imparts,
And writes forgiveness on the broken hearts.

But, lo, an ampler field appears in view,
And calls his champion forth to conquests new :
Nor toils nor dangers can his zeal repress,
Nor crowds detain him by his own success :
In vain his children tempt him to delay,
With prayers and tears invite his longer stay,
Or ask, as sharers of his weal or woe,
To earth's remotest bounds with him to go :
He leaves them all behind, at Jesu's word,
He finds them all again in his beloved Lord.

See where he flies ! as if by Heaven design'd,
To' awake and draw our whole apostate kind !
He takes the eagle's with the morning's wings,
To other worlds the great salvation brings,
As sent, with joyful news of sins forgiven,
To every ransom'd soul on this side heaven !

With ready mind the' Americans receive
Their angel-friend, and his report believe,
So soon the servant's heavenly call they find,
So soon they hear the Master's feet behind :
He comes—to wound and heal ! At his descent
The mountains flow, the rocky hearts are rent ;
Numbers, acknowledging their gracious day,
Turn to the Lord, and cast their sins away,
And faint and sink, beneath their guilty load,
Into the arms of a forgiving God.
His Son reveal'd they now exult to know,
And after a despised Redeemer go,
In all the works prepared their faith to prove,
In patient hope, and fervency of love.

How blest the messenger whom Jesus owns !
How swift with the commission'd word he runs !
The sacred fire shut up within his breast
Breaks out again ; the weary cannot rest,
Cannot consent his feeble flesh to spare,
But rushes on, Jehovah's harbinger :
His one delightful work, and steadfast aim,
To pluck poor souls as brands out of the flame,
To scatter the good seed on every side,
To spread the knowledge of the Crucified,

From a small spark a mighty fire to raise,
And fill the continent with Jesu's praise.

What recompence for all his endless toil ?
The Master pays him with a constant smile,
With peace, and power, and comforts from above,
Grace upon grace, and looks of rapturous love.
When often spent and spiritless he lies,
Jesus beholds him with propitious eyes,
And looks him back his strength, and bids arise,
Sends him again to run the lengthen'd race,
Prosper his work, and shines on all his ways.

The man of God, whom God delights to' approve
In his great labours of paternal love,
Love of the little ones—for these he cares,
The lambs, the orphans, in his bosom bears ;
Knowing in whom he trusts, provides a place,
And spreads a table in the wilderness,
A father of the fatherless, supplies
Their daily wants—with manna from the skies,
In answer to his prayer, so strangely given,
His fervent prayer of faith that opens heaven.

What mighty works the prayer of faith can do !
The good of souls, and Jesus in his view,
He sees the basis sure, which cannot fail,
Laid by the true, divine Zerubbabel ;
The rising house, built up by swift degrees,
The crowning-stone, brought forth with shouts, he sees :
The Lord hath finish'd what his hands begun ;
Ascribe the gracious work to grace alone.

The house is built ; and shall not God provide ?
Plentiful help pours in on every side,
From hearts inclined the hungry lambs to feed,
By Him who satisfies the poor with bread ;
Whose blessing makes the earth her riches yield,
The wilderness becomes a fruitful field,
Bids golden harvests round his house arise,
And turns a waste into a paradise.

With heart enlarged, with confidence increased,
In all his purposes and labours bless'd,
The steward wise, and faithful to his trust,
Gives God the praise, and sinks into the dust,
And cries, o'erwhelm'd his Master's smile to see,
“ O when shall I begin to live for thee ! ”

More grace is on the humble man bestow'd,
More work on him that loves to work for God ;

By whose supreme decree, and kind command,
He now returns to bless his native land,
(Nor dreads the threatenings of the watery deep,
Or all its storms, with Jesus in the ship,)
To see how the beloved disciples fare,
Fruits of his toil, and children of his prayer,
A second Gospel benefit to' impart,
And comfort and confirm the faithful heart.

So the first Missioners in Jesu's name
Went forth, the world's Redeemer to proclaim,
The crucified, supreme, eternal God,
The general peace and pardon in his blood ;
From clime to clime the restless heralds run,
To make their Saviour through the nations known,
Planted in every place, to serve their Lord,
A living church, and water'd by the word,
While Heaven was pleased their ministry to bless,
And God bestow'd the thousand-fold increase.

But shall my partial, fond presumption dare
A stripling with Apostles to compare ?
Their powers miraculous he dared not claim,
Though still his Gospel and his God the same.
Commission'd by his God, the word of grace,
Where'er the Lord an open door displays,
Freely as he receives, he freely gives,
And daily dying by the Gospel lives ;
Renews his strength, renews his prosperous toil
In every corner of our favour'd isle,
And publishes salvation to the poor,
And spreads the joyous news from shore to shore.

For when the rich an offer'd Christ reject,
And spurn the Preacher with his odious sect,
Out of their temples cast, he straight obeys,
Goes forth to all the hedges and highways,
Arrests the most abandon'd slaves of sin,
And forces the poor vagrants to come in,
To share the feast for famish'd souls design'd,
And fill the house enlarged for all the sinful kind.

How beauteous on the mountain-tops appear
The feet of God's auspicious messenger,
Who brings good tidings of a world forgiven,
Who publishes a peace 'twixt earth and heaven,
And cries to Zion, " He that purged thy stains,
Thy Saviour-God and King for ever reigns ! "

Soon as he thus lifts up his trumpet-voice,
Attentive thousands tremble, or rejoice :

Who faithfully the welcome truth receive,
 Rejoice, and closer to their Saviour cleave :
 Poor Christless sinners, wounded by the word,
 (Lively and sharper than a two-edged sword,
 Spirit and soul almighty to divide,)
 Drop, like autumnal leaves, on every side,
 Lamenting after Him they crucified !
 While God inspires the comfort, or the dread,
 Wider and wider still the cry is spread,
 Till all perceive the influence from above,
 O'erwhelm'd with grief, or swallow'd up in love.

What multitudes repent, and then believe,
 When God doth utterance to the Preacher give !
 Whether he speaks the words of sober sense,
 Or pours a flood of artless eloquence,
 Ransacks the foul apostate creature's breast,
 And shows the man half-devil, and half-beast ;
 Or warmly pleads his dear Redeemer's cause ;
 Or pity on the poor and needy draws ;
 " The Deist scarce from offering can withhold,
 And misers wonder they should part with gold : "
 Opposers struck, the powerful word admire,
 In speechless awe, the hammer and the fire,
 While WHITEFIELD melts the stubborn rocks, or breaks,
 In consolation or in thunder speaks,
 From strength to strength our young Apostle goes,
 Pours like a torrent, and the land o'erflows,
 Resistless wins his way with rapid zeal,
 Turns the world upside down, and shakes the gates of hell !

Such for a length of years his glorious race
 He ran, nor e'er look'd back, or slack'd his pace ;
 Starting afresh, on this alone intent,
 And straining up the steep of excellent,
 Forgetting still the things already done,
 And reaching forth to those not yet begun,
 Eager he press'd to his high calling's prize,
 By violent faith resolved to scale the skies,
 And apprehend his Lord in paradise.

Through his abundant toils, with fix'd amaze
 We see revived the work of ancient days ;
 In his unspotted life with joy we see
 The fervours of primeval piety :
 A pattern to the flock by Jesus bought,
 A living witness of the truths he taught,
 Meek, lowly, patient, wise above his years,
 Redeem'd from earth, with all their hopes and fears,
 Not to the vain desires of men he lived,
 Not with delight their high applause received,

But praised the Lord for what his grace had done,
And simply lived to serve his will alone.

The heavenly principle of faith within,
The strong, divine antipathy to sin,
The Spirit's law, the meek, ingrafted word,
The vital knowledge of a heart-felt Lord,
The nature new, the' incorruptible seed,
Its power throughout his life and actions spread,
And show'd the man regenerate from above,
By fraudless innocence, and child-like love.

For friendship form'd by nature and by grace,
(His heart made up of truth and tenderness,)
Stranger to guile, unknowing to deceive,
In anger, malice, or revenge to live,
He lived himself on others to bestow,
A ministerial spirit while here below,
Beloved by all the lovers of his Lord,
By none but Satan's synagogue abhorr'd.

Nor did their fierce abhorrence always last :
When on the right the Gospel net he cast,
The powerful charms of soft persuasion tried,
And show'd them their Redeemer's hands and side,
Love irresistible they could not bear,
Or stand against the torrent of his prayer ;
By bleeding love their hatred he o'ercame,
And seized the lawful spoils in Jesu's name.

Betwixt the mountain and the multitude,
His life was spent in prayer and doing good :
To search the sacred leaves his soul's delight,
And pray them o'er and o'er by day and night,
To wrestle on for faith, and faith's increase,
To follow after peace and holiness,
At Jesu's feet to catch the quick'ning word,
And into nothing sink before the Lord.

Though long by following multitudes admired,
No party for himself he e'er desired,
His one desire to make the Saviour known,
To magnify the name of Christ alone :
If others strove who should the greatest be,
No lover of pre-eminence was he,
Nor envied those his Lord vouchsafed to bless,
But joy'd in theirs as in his own success,
His friends in honour to himself preferr'd,
And least of all in his own eyes appear'd.

When crowds for counsel or relief applied,
 No surly rustic he, with cruel pride,
 To bid the sorrowful intruders wait,
 Or send the suppliants weeping from his gate ;
 But ever list'ning to the wretch's call,
 Courteous, and mild, and pitiful to all.
 No Prophet smooth to men of high estate,
 No servile flatterer of the rich or great,
 Their faults he dared with freedom to reprove,
 The honest freedom of respectful love,
 And sweetly forced their consciences to own
 He sought not theirs, but them, for Jesu's sake alone.

To all he render'd what to all he owed,
 Whose loyalty from true religion flow'd :
 The man of one consistent character,
 Who fear'd his God, he *must* his King revere :
 Fix'd as a rock, for all assaults prepared,
 No sly seducers found him off his guard,
 But miss'd their aim to fix the factious brand
 On faithful men, the quiet of the land.

Single his eye, transparently sincere
 His upright heart did in his words appear,
 His cheerful heart did in his visage shine ;
 A man of true simplicity divine,
 Not always as the serpent wise, yet love
 Preserved him always harmless as the dove :
 Or if into mistake through haste he fell,
 He show'd what others labour to conceal ;
 Convinced, no palliating excuses sought,
 But freely own'd his error, or his fault,
 Nor fear'd the triumph of ungenerous foes,
 Who humbler from his fall, and stronger, rose.
 When Satan strove the brethren to divide,
 And turn their zeal to,—“ Who is on my side ? ”
 One moment warm'd with controversial fire,
 He felt the spark as suddenly expire,
 He felt revived the pure ethereal flame,
 The love for all that bow'd to Jesu's name,
 Nor ever more would for opinions fight
 With men whose life, like his, was in the right.
 His soul disdain'd to serve the selfish ends
 Of zealots, fierce against his bosom-friends,
 (Who urged him with his bosom-friends to part,
 Might sooner tear the fibres from his heart,)
 He now the wiles of the accuser knew,
 And cast him down, and his strong-holds o'erthrew,
 With each partition-wall by men design'd,
 To put asunder those whom God had join'd.

How have we heard his generous zeal exclaim,
 And load with just reproach the bigot's name !
 The men by sameness of opinion tied,
 Who their own party love, and none beside ;
 Or like the Romish sect infallible,
 Secure themselves, and send the rest to hell !
 Impartial, as unfeign'd, his love o'erflow'd
 To all, but chiefly to the house of God ;
 To those who thought his sentiments amiss—
 O that their hearts were half as right as his ;
 Within no narrow party-banks confined,
 But open and enlarged to all mankind !

Lover of all mankind, his life he gave,
 Christ to exalt, and precious souls to save :
 Nor age nor sickness could abate his zeal,
 To feed the flock, and serve his Master's will.
 Though spent with pain, and toils that never ceased,
 He labour'd on, nor ask'd to be released ;
 Though daily waiting for the welcome word,
 Longing to be dissolved, and meet his Lord,
 Yet still he strangely lived, by means unknown,
 In deaths immortal till his work was done ;
 And wish'd for Christ his latest breath to spend,
 That life and labour might together end.

What after God he asks can God deny ?
 Ripe for the summons, "Get thee up and die ;"
 Mature in grace, and ready to depart,
 The spirit cries all-powerful in his heart,
 "O that to-day might close my ministry !
 O that I might to-day my Saviour see !"

He speaks—and dies ! transported to resign
 His spotless soul into the hands divine !
 He sinks into his loving Lord's embrace,
 And sees his dear Redeemer face to face !

O what a God is ours ! so true and just
 To all that in his faithful mercies trust !
 Our kind, omnipotent, eternal Friend,
 Who freely loved, and loves us to the end !
 He now receives his honour'd servant up,
 Nor lets us grieve, as Heathen without hope,
 Like them who *lose* their friends at death, like them
 Who never knew our Lord and God supreme ;
 With whom the spirits of the righteous rest,
 Till all the church are gather'd to his breast.

Even now the cordial hope my sorrow cheers,
 And stops the current of these needless tears :

Shall I a momentary loss deplore,
 Lamenting after him that weeps no more?
 What though, forbid by the Atlantic wave,
 I cannot share my old companion's grave;
 Yet at the trumpet's call my dust shall rise,
 With his fly up to Jesus in the skies,
 And live with him the life that never dies.

O could I first perform my Master's will,
 Faithful in little, and his work fulfil,
 Like him I mourn, a steward wise and good,
 Pursuing him as he his Lord pursued!
 O had he dropp'd his mantle in his flight!
 O might his spirit on all the Prophets 'light!
 But vain the hope of miracles to come;
 There's no Elisha in Elijah's room.

Yet lo! the Lord our God for ever lives,
 And daily by his word the dead revives;
 His Spirit is not restrain'd, but striving still,
 And carrying on his work by whom He will.
 He wills us in our partner's steps to tread;
 And, call'd and quicken'd by the speaking dead,
 We trace our shining pattern from afar,
 His old associates in the glorious war,
 Resolved to use the utmost strength bestow'd,
 Like him to spend and to be spent for God,
 By holy violence seize the crown so nigh,
 Fight the good fight, our threefold foe defy,
 And more than conquerors in the harness die.

Jesus, preserve, till thou our souls receive,
 And let us in thy servant's spirit live!
 Thy Spirit breathed into his faithful breast,
 Be it in every labourer's life express'd;
 In all our works, and words, and tempers seen,
 Unbounded charity to God and men;
 The meek humility, the fervent zeal,
 All-patient hope, and faith invincible;
 Faith in its primitive simplicity,
 Faith to walk on till we depart in thee.

Through thee approaching now the gracious throne,
 Our instant prayer an echo of thine own,
 We offer up, with all the faithful race,
 For all the foes and strangers to thy grace,
 The fallen Church in whose defence we stand,
 To ward thy judgments from a guilty land,
 Till wrestling on, the praying few prevail,
 And life and mercy turn the hov'ring scale.

O that the prayer of faith might now return !
 O that a nation, of thy Spirit born,
 Might rise thy witnesses in this their day,
 And multitudes of Priests the truth obey,
 The last, alas ! in every age to bring
 Back to their hearts their long-neglected King !
 Yet now let all believe, at thy command,
 And spread the Gospel faith through every land ;
 Till every heart and tongue thy name confess,
 And the whole earth's renew'd in righteousness,
 O'erflow'd with love, a paradise restored,
 For ever fill'd with THEE, the GLORY OF THE LORD !

ON THE EQUALITY OF PRESBYTERS AND BISHOPS.

VOL. II.—PAGE 422.

THE following facts and documents prove that Mr. Wesley's ordinations were no novelties in the Christian church. St. Jerome, whose letter to Evagrius is placed first in order, and who declares that, from the earliest times, the Bishops of Alexandria were ordained by the Presbyters, was one of the most eminent of the Latin Fathers, and flourished in the fourth century.

HIERONYMUS EVAGRIO.

Legimus in Esaiâ : “ Fatuus fatua loquetur.” Audio quendam in tantam erupisse vecordiam, ut diaconos presbyteris, id est, episcopis, anteferret. Nam cùm apostolus perspicuè doceat, eosdem esse presbyteros quos episcopos ; quid patitur mensarum et viduarum minister, ut supra eos se tumidus efferat, ad quorum preces Christi corpus sanguisque conficitur ? Quæris auctoritatem ? Audi testimonium : “ Paulus et Timotheus, servi Christi Jesu, omnibus sanctis in Christo Jesu, qui sunt Philippis, cum episcopis et diaconis.” (Philip. i. 1.) Vis et aliud exemplum ? In Actibus Apostolorum, ad unius ecclesiæ sacerdotes ita Paulus loquitur : “ Attendite vobis, et cuncto gregi in quo vos Spiritus Sanctus posuit episcopos, ut regeretis ecclesiam Domini, quam acquisivit sanguine suo.” (Act. xx. 28.) Ac ne quis contentiosè in unâ ecclesiâ plures episcopos fuisse contendat, audi et aliud testimonium, in quo manifestissimè comprobatur eundem esse episcopum atque presbyterum : “ Propter hoc reliqui te in Cretâ, ut quædeerant corrigeres, et constitueres presbyteros per civitates, sicut

et ego tibi mandavi. Si quis est sinè crimine, unius uxoris vir, filios habens fideles, non in accusatione luxuriæ, aut non subditos. Oportet enim episcopum sine crimine esse, quasi Dei dispensatorem.” (Titus i. 5–7.) Et ad Timotheum: “Noli negligere gratiam quæ in te est, quæ tibi data est prophetiæ, per impositionem manuum presbyterii.” (1 Timo. iv. 14.) Sed et Petrus in primâ Epistolâ: “Presbyteros,” inquit, “in vobis precor compresbyter, et testis passionum Christi, et futuræ gloriæ quæ revelanda est particeps, regere gregem Christi, et inspicere non ex necessitate, sed voluntariè juxta Deum.” (1 Pet. v. 1, 2.) Quod quidem Græcè significantius dicitur, ἐπισκοποῦντες, id est, superintendentes, undè et nomen episcopi tractum est. Parva tibi videntur tantorum virorum testimonia? Clangat tubâ evangelicâ “filius tonitru,” (Marc. iii. 17,) quem Jesus amavit plurimùm, (Johan. xix. 26; xxi. 7, 20, 24,) qui de pectore Salvatoris doctrinarum fluentia potavit: (xiii. 25:) “Presbyter, electæ dominæ et filiis ejus, quos ego diligo in veritate.” (2 Johan. 1.) Et in aliâ epistolâ: “Presbyter, Caio charissimo, quem ego diligo in veritate.” (3 Johan. 1.)

Quòd autem postea unus electus est, qui cæteris præponeretur, in schismatis remedium factum est; ne unusquisque ad se trahens Christi ecclesiam rumperet. Nam et Alexandriæ, a Marco evangelistâ usque ad Heracleam et Dionysium episcopos, presbyteri semper unum ex se electum, in excelsiori gradu collocatum, episcopum nominabant: quomodo si exercitus imperatorem faciat; aut diaconi eligant de se, quem industrium noverint, et archidiaconum vocent. Quid enim facit, exceptâ ordinatione, episcopus, quod presbyter non faciat?

Nec altera Romanæ urbis ecclesia, altera totius orbis, existimanda est. Et Galliæ, et Britanniæ, et Africa, et Persis, et Oriens, et India, et omnes barbaræ nationes, unum Christum adorant, unam observant regulam veritatis. Si autoritas quæritur, orbis major est urbe. Ubicunque fuerit episcopus, sive Romæ sive Eugubii, sive Constantinopoli sive Rhegii, sive Alexandriæ sive Tanis, ejusdem meriti, ejusdem est et sacerdotii. Potentia divitiarum, et paupertatis humilitas, vel sublimiorem vel inferiorem episcopum non facit. Cæterùm omnes apostolorum successores sunt.

Sed dicis, quomodo Romæ ad testimonium diaconi presbyter ordinatur? Quid mihi profers unius urbis consuetudinem? Quid paucitatem, de quâ ortum est supercilium in leges ecclesiæ, vindicas? Omne quod rarum est, plus appetitur. Pulegium apud Indos pipere preciosius est. Diaconos paucitas honorabiles, presbyteros turba contemptibiles facit. Cæterùm etiam in ecclesiâ Romæ, presbyteri sedent, et stant diaconi; licet, paulatim incre-

brescentibus vitiis, inter presbyteros, absente episcopo, sedere diaconum viderim, et, in domesticis conviviiis, benedictiones presbyteris dare. Discant qui hoc faciunt non se rectè facere, et audiant apostolos: "Non est dignum, ut, relinquentes verbum Dei, ministremus mensis." (Act. Apost. vi. 2.) Sciant quare diaconi constituti sint. Legant Actus Apostolorum, recordentur conditionis suæ. PRESBYTER et EPISCOPUS, aliud ætatis, aliud dignitatis est nomen. Unde et ad Titum et ad Timotheum de ordinatione episcopi et diaconi dicitur. (Tit. i. 5-7; 1 Tim. iii. 1-13.) De presbyteris omninò reticetur, quia in episcopo et presbyter continetur. Qui provehitur, de minori ad majus provehitur. Aut igitur ex presbytero ordinetur diaconus, ut presbyter minor diacono comprobetur, in quem crescit ex parvo: aut si ex diacono ordinatur presbyter, noverit se lucris minorem, sacerdotio esse majorem. Et ut sciamus traditiones apostolicas sumptas de Veteri Testamento, quòd Aaron, et filii ejus, atque Levitæ, in templo fuerunt, hoc sibi episcopi, et presbyteri, et diaconi vendicent in ecclesiâ.—Divi Eusebii Hieronymi Stridonensis Opera omnia. Accessit his in Epistolarum tomos nova Scholiorum, per Erasmum Roterodamum, Instauratio. Parisiis apud Claudium Chevallonium. 1534. Tom. ii., pp. 117, 118.

Erasmus divides the Works of St. Jerome into different classes: first, those which are his undoubted productions; then, those concerning which some doubts may be indulged; those of an intermixed description, &c. This Epistle to Evagrius he places in the first class, among those which are genuine. The reader will find the following to be a free translation:—

ST. JEROME'S EPISTLE TO EVAGRIUS.

WE read in the Prophet Isaiah: "The vile person will speak villany." (Isaiah xxxii. 6.) I am informed, that a certain man among you has exhibited such a specimen of his folly as to give precedence to Deacons before Presbyters, that is, before Bishops. For, since the Apostle teaches, with much perspicuity, that Presbyters are the same as Bishops, what has possessed this server of tables and curator of widows, (Acts vi. 1, 2,) that he should thus, with tumid arrogance, elevate himself above those holy men to whose prayers are committed* the body and blood of Christ? Do you request to know my authority for this declaration? Listen then to this testimony: "Paul and Timotheus the servants of

* *Conficitur* in this passage possesses a large ecclesiastical signification, nearly tantamount to—"are entrusted for the purpose of rendering them effectual to devout recipients in the sacrament of the Lord's supper."

Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacons." (Phil. i. 1.) Do you desire to have another example? In the Acts of the Apostles, Paul thus addresses τοὺς πρεσβυτέρους, *the Presbyters* or *Elders* of one church [that of Ephesus]: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you ἐπισκόπους, *Bishops* or *Overseers*, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts xx. 17, 28.) And lest some one should pertinaciously contend, that there must then have been many Bishops in one church, let him hearken to another testimony, which contains a most manifest proof that a Bishop and a Presbyter are the same: "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things which are wanting, and ordain PRESBYTERS or *Elders* in every city, as I had appointed thee: if any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, not accused of riot, or unruly. For a BISHOP must be blameless, as the steward of God," &c. (Titus i. 5—7.) To Timothy also he says: "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the PRESBYTERY." (1 Tim. iv. 14.) But Peter likewise declares in his first Epistle: "The Elders [*Presbyteros*] which are among you I exhort, who am also an Elder, [*Compresbyter*, "a fellow-Presbyter,"] and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of Christ which is among you, taking the oversight thereof,* not by constraint, but willingly," according to godliness. (1 Peter v. 1, 2.) The signification of *taking the oversight thereof* is still more strongly marked in the Greek word here employed, ἐπισκοποῦντες, "acting as *Superintendents*," from which the word *Episcopus*, "a Bishop," has its derivation.

* All biblical critics are aware, that St. Jerome quoted from a Latin version of the Scriptures of a much earlier date than that which received its *divine* sanction from the Council of Trent. In several passages the difference of rendering is very remarkable. In this clause St. Jerome's version reads: "Rule the flock of Christ, and inspect it," &c. The critical scholium of Erasmus upon it is worthy of transcription:—

"St. Jerome's reading seems to have been somewhat different from that which is found in the Greek copies which we possess, in which it is written: Ποιμάνετε ἐπισκοποῦντες that is, 'Taking the oversight of the flock, feed it.' But neither of these Greek words could be adequately rendered into Latin. For neither is the signification of ποιμαίνειν simply *to feed* or *to rule*, but *to feed a flock*; nor is the meaning of ἐπισκοπεῖν merely *to inspect for the purpose of becoming well acquainted with anything*, a signification which the word bears in Latin, but rather, *diligently to watch and care, in order to provide for the flock such things as are necessary.*"

Does the testimony of such famous men as these appear to you to be of little importance? Then let “the son of thunder,” (Mark iii. 17,) let him whom Jesus greatly loved, (John xiii. 25; xix. 26; xxi. 7, 20, 24,) who drank of the streams of divine doctrine as they issued from the breast of the Saviour,—let him with his evangelical trumpet sound a clangour in your ear: “The *Presbyter*, or Elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth.” (2 John 1.) And in his other Epistle: “The *Presbyter*, or Elder, unto the well-beloved Gaius, whom I love in the truth.” (3 John 1.)

But the election of one from among themselves to be placed above the rest, was a practice which they subsequently adopted, to operate as a remedy against schism; lest each *Presbyter*, attracting unto himself a portion of the church of Christ, should break the existing unity. For, even at Alexandria, from the age of Mark the Evangelist, down to that of the Bishops Heracleas and Dionysius, one chosen from among themselves, and placed by them in a higher degree, was dignified by the *Presbyters* with the title of BISHOP; much after the same manner as that in which an army chooses its Commander;* or as the Deacons elect one from their own body, of whose diligence they have had experience, and style him their Archdeacon. For, if we except the Bishop’s act of ordination, what is there which he does, and which a *Presbyter* may not do?

Nor ought we to form an estimate of the Church at Rome, as if it were different from the whole church throughout the world. The converted inhabitants of the Gallic provinces, of the British isles, and of Africa, those of Persia, of the East, and of India, indeed all the barbarous nations, adore one and the same Christ, and observe one and the only rule of truth. If we institute an inquiry into the [relative] authority of each, that of the whole world is in this respect greater than the authority of a single city. Of whatsoever place a man may be Bishop,—whether of Rome or of Gubio, of Constantinople or of Region,† of Alexandria or of Zoan,—in personal merit he is equal to the rest of his brethren, and he forms one of the same sacerdotal order.‡ The power consequent

* St. Jerome lived in those days when the Roman armies chose their own *imperatorem*, “general,” who commonly by their aid became the ruler of the whole empire; and hence “emperor” is as correct a translation of the word as “commander.”

† “*Rhegium*, or *Region*, a village in Thrace, in the vicinity of the city of Constantinople.”—De La Martiniere’s *Grand Dictionnaire*.

‡ The remark of Erasmus on this passage is very good:—

“The names of the places which occur in this sentence are situated in parts widely distant. Gubio is in Italy; Constantinople, in Macedonia, not far from the confines of Thrace; Region, in Greece; and Alexandria and Zoan, in Egypt.

on the richness of his diocess does not render a Bishop [*sublimior*] more eminent in rank ; neither does the lowliness of a poor Diocesan make him a whit inferior to his more opulent episcopal brethren : but all of them, whether they be the occupiers of rich or of poor sees, are successors of the Apostles.

But you ask : “ How is it that at Rome a Presbyter is ordained in consequence of testimonials from a Deacon ? ” Why do you object against me the usage of a single city ? Why do you thus defend that paucity [of Deacons at Rome] from which has arisen such utter contempt for the laws of the church [universal] ? Men desire, with the greater appetency, everything on account of its rarity. Among the inhabitants of the East Indies, our common herb pennyroyal is of far more value than their own pepper. At Rome the paucity of Deacons renders them honourable ; while the vast multitude of Presbyters brings their order into disrepute. But, even in the Church of Rome, the Presbyters sit, while the Deacons stand ; though, on the gradual increase of corrupt innovations, I have seen a Deacon place himself on the same seat with the Presbyters, during the absence of the Bishop ; and, in the convivial intercourse of private life, I have heard a Deacon invoke sacred benedictions on the Presbyters then present. Let the men who are guilty of these improprieties be taught that their conduct is exceedingly unbecoming, and let them listen to this declaration of the Apostles : “ It is not reasonable that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.” (Acts vi. 2.) Let them fully understand the reason of the primary constitution of Deacons. Let them peruse the Acts of the Apostles, and then remember their proper condition. Of the two words, PRESBYTER or Elder, and BISHOP, the one is a title accorded to age, the other a title of dignity. Hence, both in the Epistle to Titus, and in that to Timothy, the Apostle mentions only the ordination (or appointment) of Bishops and Deacons. (Titus i. 5—7 ; 1 Tim. iii. 1—13.) An entire silence is observed concerning Presbyters ; because a Presbyter is one who is also included in a Bishop.

He who obtains promotion is elevated from that which is less to something which is greater. Wherefore either let a Deacon be ordained from the order of Presbyters, that we may have proof of a Presbyter being less than a Deacon, to which elevation he may have been raised from a state of extreme littleness ; or else, if a Pres-

But St. Jerome appears to have made such a disposition of them as in every clause to conjoin the name of a celebrated city with that of some obscure town or village. From the whole he draws this inference : The dignity of a Bishop must not be estimated by the magnitude of his episcopal rule or jurisdiction, but by his living merit ; for in episcopal functions they are all equal.”

byter is really ordained out of the order of Deacons, let him rest assured, that, though his perquisites may be less, yet in sacerdotal rank he is greater. And, that we may rightly understand the apostolical traditions as derived from the Old Testament, how Aaron, and his sons, and the Levites officiated together in the Jewish temple, let the Bishops, Presbyters, and Deacons of the Christian church claim the benefit of this example in behalf of themselves.

With reference to this letter of Jerome Bishop Stillingfleet makes the following remarks:—"The clearest evidence of this [that Bishops are not superior to Presbyters as to the power of order] is in the church of Alexandria, of which Jerome speaks: *Nam Alexandria à Marco Evangelistâ usque ad Heracleam et Dionysium Episcopos, Presbyteri semper unum ex se electum, &c.* That learned Doctor who would persuade us that the Presbyters did only make choice of the person, but the ordination was performed by other Bishops, would do well, first, to tell us who and where those Bishops in Egypt were, who did consecrate or ordain the Bishop of Alexandria, after his election by the Presbyters; especially while Egypt remained but one province, under the government of the *Præfectus Augustalis*. Secondly, how had this been in the least pertinent to Jerome's purpose, to have made a particular instance in the church of Alexandria for that which was common to all other churches besides? For the old rule of the canon law for Bishops was, *Electio clericorum est, consensus principis, petitio plebis*. Thirdly, this election in Jerome must imply the conferring the power and authority whereby the Bishop acted. For, first, the setting up of this power is by Jerome attributed to this choice, as appears by his words, *Quod autem postea unus electus est qui cæteris præponeretur, in schismatis remedium factum est, ne unusquisque ad se trahens Christi Ecclesiam rumperet.* (*Advers. Lucil.*) Whereby it is evident Jerome attributes the first original of that *exsors potestas*, as he calls it elsewhere, in the Bishop above Presbyters, not to any apostolical institution, but to the free choice of the Presbyters themselves: which doth fully explain what he means by *consuetudo Ecclesiæ*, before spoken of; namely, that which came up by a voluntary act of the governors of churches themselves. Secondly, it appears that by the election he means conferring authority, by the instances he brings to that purpose: as the Roman armies choosing their Emperors, who had then no other power but what they received by the length of the sword; and the Deacons choosing their Archdeacons, who had no other power but what was merely conferred

by the choice of the colleges of Deacons. To which we may add what Eutychius, the Patriarch of Alexandria, saith in his *Origines Ecclesiæ Alexandrinæ*, published in Arabic by our most learned Selden, who expressly affirms ‘that the twelve Presbyters constituted by Mark upon the vacancy of the see, did choose out of their number one to be head over the rest; and the other eleven did lay their hands upon him, and blessed him, and made him Patriarch,’ pp. 29, 30. Neither is the authority of Eutychius so much to be slighted in this case, coming so near to Jerome as he doth: who, doubtless, had he told us that Mark and Anianus, &c., did all this without any Presbyters, might have had the good fortune to have been quoted with as much frequency and authority as the anonymous author of the martyrdom of Timothy in Photius, (who there unhappily follows the story of the seven sleepers,) or the author of the Apostolical Constitutions, whose credit is everlastingly blasted by the excellent Mr. Dailh, *De Pseudepigraphis Apostolorum*: so much doth men’s interest tend to the enhancing or abating the esteem and credit both of the dead and the living! By this we see that where no positive restraints from consent and choice, for the unity and peace of the church, have restrained men’s liberty, as to the external exercise of the power of order or jurisdiction, every one being himself advanced into the authority of a church-governor, hath an internal power of conferring the same upon persons fit for it.”—Stillingfleet’s *Irenicum*, pp. 273—275. Second edition.

The sentiments contained in the preceding epistle of St. Jerome to Evagrius seem to have made a deep impression on the mind of Luther, and to have exercised a considerable influence in his settlement of the Christian ministry in the Protestant Churches of Germany. This will be rendered apparent in the subjoined extract from Seckendorf’s “History of Lutheranism:”—

Towards the close of this year, 1533, Luther composed his book, “On the solitary Mass, performed in a Corner, and on the Consecration of Priests.” In this work he says,—

“Bishops and Presbyters are but one order: of this fact Jerome was not ignorant. Neither had the Bishops of that early age greater congregations than those which are now to be found at Torgau, Leipsic, Grimm, or Wirtemberg. Hippo was in no respect better than any of these modern cities: yet Augustine, the Bishop of that see, was greater in the church of Christ than any Pope or Cardinal whatsoever; and he consecrated many Bishops and Pastors.”

He then proceeds to assert, that the force and efficacy of the ministry do not depend on any *opus operatum*, [on the mere act of ordination or appointment,] but on the institution of Christ himself; and that such appointments lose not their efficacy, even though they may be conferred by bad men. He adds, that in this book therefore he has commenced anew the work of destruction against the chrism and the antichristian anointing of Priests, and has reclaimed and restored to the church the pure ordination of Ministers according to the primitive method, of which the more powerful Bishops had deprived their weaker episcopal brethren.

An attempt had been made, at the Diet of Augsburg, to effect a reconciliation between the Papists and the Protestants, to which the former annexed, as a preliminary condition, the continuance or the restoration of Popish episcopal ordination. On refusing that condition, the Protestants abandoned all hope of a sound and equitable adjustment of existing differences. It became necessary therefore that Ministers should be ordained for the churches of Christ in those regions and cities which adhered to the Augsburg Confession; not to become massing sacrificers, but Preachers of the word, and dispensers of the sacraments. That no doubt might be indulged concerning the right and the efficacy of this Protestant ordination, Luther showed so much regard for the consciences of his followers, as to make a public exposure of the sacrifice of the mass, and of the Romish priesthood which had been instituted for that express purpose. Moreover, because the Popish Bishops ordained no other than mass-making Priests, and because on this account the Ministers of the Protestant Churches could not seek ordination from them, Luther asserted in behalf of these Churches the right of vocation to the ministerial office. In this manner he established the separation from the Papacy; because it was impossible for the Romish Church to be reconciled with that of the Protestants,—a vain attempt, as had been proved by its want of success at Augsburg. But since that corrupt establishment could not be removed by force, its continuance was to be tolerated as an evil; and thus even Bishops were allowed to remain in Germany, among those Princes, and in those cities, that adhered to that system. This is the scope of the passages which have been already cited, in Luther's own expressions. But concerning the right of a Christian church to call and ordain Ministers, the following paragraph is deserving of particular consideration. It occurs in the third page of his treatise.

“This is a solid rock, and serves as our firmest foundation:—Wheresoever the Gospel is correctly and purely taught, there of necessity a Christian church exists. For he who is at all dubious about the truth of this axiom, has his doubts also with regard to the

Gospel and the word of God itself. But in whatever place a Christian church is in existence, having the subjoined adjuncts, which are of *prime importance*, (namely, the word of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, faith, prayer, baptism, the holy supper, the keys, and the ministry,) the same church likewise possesses those which are only of *secondary importance*; such, for instance, as the right of calling to the exercise of the ministry men who may preach the word of God and dispense the sacraments. What signification do we give to these words of Christ?—‘If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.’ (Matt. xviii. 19, 20.) How great soever may be the right or the power which *two or three* possess, far greater must that be which is possessed by entire congregations.* How admirable the simplicity with which Paul speaks about ordination!—‘The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.’ (2 Tim. ii. 2.) Here we find no mention of chrism or of holy butter, but only the command to instruct others in the word of God. He to whom this trust is committed is esteemed by Paul as a Pastor, a Bishop, and a Pontiff; for all sacred functions are comprised in this one command,—to preach the word of God. This is an office which Christ has always held as peculiarly and supremely his own prerogative; for through his words, not only are the sacraments themselves constituted, but likewise the very form of a sacrament. This is a fact which even the Papists do not deny. Christ must undoubtedly have forgotten the chrism or anointing, when he delivered his final instructions to the Apostles: ‘Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things *whatsoever I have commanded you*,’ &c.; the command therefore was, that they should preach the word and administer the sacraments.”

From these words it is quite apparent, as I have already intimated, that Luther in this matter rested on a true and infallible foundation; and that he was assailed in vain with loud clamours by the Protestants, for not sending the Reformed Churches to Rome, to obtain thence the privilege of calling out and ordaining their own Ministers. For this right follows as a necessary adjunct to the doc-

* Seckendorf’s side-note to this passage is remarkable:—*Ordinatio ex jure divino omnibus cœtibus Christianis competens asseritur*: “ORDINATION BY DIVINE RIGHT is here asserted to be competent to all Christian congregations.”

trine of a church ; so that in every place in which such a Christian assembly is known and recognised, there immediately arises the ability, nay, the obligation, of appointing to the ministry. Nor is it necessary that this faculty or ability should be propagated through the hands of Bishops ; least of all is this needful when these episcopal officials themselves refuse to exercise their functions, which, on the other hand, they abuse for the establishment of errors and of unjust domination. A concession sufficiently ample therefore was offered to the Popish Bishops at the Diet of Augsburg, when the Protestants avowed their willingness to receive episcopal ordination, provided the Bishops would show themselves ready to employ that mode of ordination in a right manner, to promote those important and substantial parts of ministerial duty, the preaching of God's word and the administration of the sacraments, according to the form which had been divinely prescribed in the Scriptures ; and would also consent to omit and discard all those innovations which had been introduced into the church through the rude and barbarous customs of preceding ages, and which had become intolerable to the consciences of Protestants. But when they were unable to obtain any such concession from the Popish Bishops, who of their own accord thus deprived themselves by ceasing to exercise their episcopal functions, the churches were compelled to resort to their original right, which, as I have just related, Luther deduced from the sayings of Christ and of his Apostles, to tranquillize the consciences of the Protestants : for in regard to their public and political rights, they were in a state of perfect safety, when, at the Pacification of Nuremburgh, they had obtained the continuance of their Reformation, until a General Council should otherwise determine.—Seckendorf's History of Lutheranism, vol. ii., pp. 59–61.

“ *Luther's taking upon him, in conjunction with other Presbyters, to consecrate Bishops, which he did on more occasions than one, would naturally be made the subject of much animadversion. I can offer no better apology for him than that made by Bishop Atterbury, in his ‘ Answer to some Considerations on the Spirit of M. Luther, and the Original of the Reformation, [written by Obadiah Walker, Master of University College, and] printed at Oxford, 1687 :—‘ That he made new Bishops, we admit ; not out of choice, but necessity ; following, as he thought, in this case, the practice of the church, mentioned in the well-known passage of St. Austin,—In Alexandria, et per totam Ægyptum, si desit Episcopus, consecrat Presbyter.’* ”—Scott's Continuation of Milner, vol. i., p. 307.

NICHOLAS AMSDORF.

IN the year 1541, on the death of Philip Count Palatine, Bishop of Neuburgh, (or Naumbourg,) the Popish Chapter of that collegiate church elected Julius Pflugius into the episcopal office. But the Elector of Saxony objected against that appointment, alleging that the Chapter had no power to act except with his consent; and accordingly he nominated our Amsdorf to the vacant see. Wherefore, on January 20th, 1542, in the city of Neuburgh-on-Saale, in the presence of the Elector J. Frederic, and of his brother J. Ernest, both Dukes of Saxony, this young man, of noble extraction and unmarried, was ordained Bishop by Luther, with whom were conjoined, in the imposition of hands, Nicholas Medler the Pastor of Neuburgh, George Spalatine the Pastor of Aldenburgh, and Wolfgang Steinius the Pastor of Weissenfels. In a book which Luther published soon afterwards, he defended this Protestant election and ordination; and produced reasons why Julius Pflugius, whom the Popish Chapter had constituted the Bishop elect, was on the contrary rejected by the church, and by the Senate and the patrons of the church. But this act of the Elector greatly exasperated the mind of the Emperor Charles V., which had previously been much alienated. Therefore, when Julius afterwards, at the Diet of Spires, complained to the Emperor of the personal injury which the Duke of Saxony had inflicted on him, Cæsar exhorted him to exercise patience some time longer; and added, "Thy cause shall be my cause." Accordingly, six years afterwards, Pflugius was restored to his episcopal see by the victorious Charles. But Amsdorf fled to Magdeburgh; which was, in the course of several succeeding years, the common asylum for most of those who had, on any account whatsoever, incurred the displeasure of the Emperor.—Melchior Adam's *Lives of German Divines*, pp. 69, 70.

JOHN BUGENHAGEN, A POMERANIAN.

IN the year 1537, Bugenhagen, then residing at Wirtemberg, was invited by Christian III., King of Denmark and Duke of Holstein, to frame a godly constitution for the promulgation of religious doctrine, for the decent observance of ecclesiastical rites, and for the formation and management of schools and colleges. Having accepted the invitation, during that visit he composed a small treatise in Latin, which comprised the model of ecclesiastical regimen. Many good men now wish to see this treatise extensively circulated, that the world may more generally know that form which was assumed by the churches, and the entire ecclesiastical government which obtained the approval of Luther and his colleagues. On that occasion, too, Bugenhagen offered up public

prayers, and conducted the whole of the coronation-service, when Christian III. was crowned King of Denmark, in Copenhagen the metropolis, on August 12th, being His Majesty's birth-day, in the presence of Albert I. Duke of Prussia, with his consort Her Royal Highness Princess Dorothea, who was the King's sister. In the same year, exactly a fortnight after the celebration of the coronation of His Majesty, seven Superintendents were ordained by Bugenhagen, in the cathedral of Copenhagen, as successors to the seven deprived Popish Bishops of the kingdom of Denmark. The King, and the States of the realm, imparted their sanction and approbation to the proceedings of the day, by honouring them with their presence. These Superintendents were empowered to discharge the necessary duties of the episcopal office, and became the authorized guardians and executors of all the ecclesiastical administration. At the same time he likewise prescribed the general course of lectures to be delivered in the University of Copenhagen ; and he directed the appointment of parochial Ministers throughout the two kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, their number being twenty-four thousand.—Melchior Adam's *Lives of German Divines*, p. 315.

Seckendorf has written a more minute account of the events which preceded this consecration of the Danish Superintendents or Bishops, by one who was himself only a Presbyter. But he blames the unnecessarily severe treatment which the Popish Bishops received from the new Monarch ; who, in the spirit of his unamiable contemporary, King Henry VIII. of England, and nearly at the same time, evinced a strong inclination to seize upon, and appropriate to his own purposes, the rich possessions and revenues of the Popish Church. The following is the conclusion of his narrative :—

“The functions of a Bishop had, till this year, been discharged much after the style of secular Princes, having assumed a display of pomp and state similar to that which distinguished the Popish Prelates of Germany. But now the episcopal office was completely abolished and abrogated, amidst the acclamations of the people, and in compliance with a decree of the States of the kingdom. The revenues arising from the palaces, towns, castles, and territories, which had formerly been appendages to the various bishoprics, were now brought into the public treasury. The enumeration of their value may be seen in *Helduaderus*. In that assembly of the States was crowned King Christian, who is styled the Third of those who bore that name. The coronation service was conducted by John Bugenhagen, a native of Pomerania, who had been specially invited for the occasion from Wirtemberg. He wrote in

Latin the formulary of ecclesiastical ordination for the whole realm, which is highly commended by Chytræus, in his fifteenth book. At the request of the King and of the States, on August 26th, in the cathedral church of Copenhagen, he also supplied the vacant sees of the seven deprived Bishops, by consecrating seven Divines as Superintendents, though they are likewise usually addressed under the title of Bishops.* Such was the termination then given in Denmark to the arrogance, pride, luxury, and bitter hatred towards all evangelical professors, which the Popish hierarchy had pertinaciously exhibited. Yet it scarcely admits of a doubt, that, had those seven Bishops pursued moderate counsels, and yielded to reformation, by allowing the public preaching of the Gospel, and the alteration and correction of certain Popish ceremonies, they might have retained possession of their dignities and rich emoluments. Luther is said to have been much displeased with that severe and sweeping suppression of bishoprics, and to have given advice to the King to preserve entire some of that church-property which is known under the name of canonries; and to appropriate the profits which they yielded to the comfortable maintenance of such learned men as might be thus enabled to render valuable services both to Church and State." (Page 242.)

Hence it is undeniable that the Episcopacy of the Protestant Churches of Germany and Denmark had a Presbyterian origin, like that which Mr. Wesley gave to his societies in America. Those who condemn him for his ordination of Dr. Coke must for the same reason condemn the Reformers of the Lutheran Churches, as well as the Presbyters and Bishops of the Alexandrian Church for two hundred years.

Nor has the Church of England, even in modern times, absolutely withheld her sanction from the sacred ministrations of men who had only received Presbyterian ordination. The venerable Swartz, who was employed by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, as one of its Missionaries in the East Indies, being himself a Presbyterian, ordained several of his spiritual children for the holy ministry; and the men thus ordained were acknowledged by that Society as accredited Ministers of the Lord Jesus.

* Lord Molesworth says, in his celebrated "Account of Denmark, as it was in the Year 1692,"—"There are six Superintendents in Denmark, who take it very kindly to be called *Bishops* and *My Lord*. There are also four in Norway. These have no temporalities, keep no ecclesiastical courts, have no cathedrals, with Prebends, Canons, Deans, Sub-Deans, &c., but are only *primi inter pares*, having the rank above the inferior Clergy of their province, and the inspection into their doctrine and manners." (Page 161.)



Jan. 29. 1752

It is agreed by us whose names are underwritten

1. That if we ~~hear any Ill of each other~~, we will not listen, or willingly inquire after any Ill concerning each other:

2. That if we do hear any Ill of each other, we will not be forward to believe it:

3. That as soon as possible we will communicate what we hear, by speaking or writing to the Person concerned:

4. That till we have done this, we will not write or speak a Syllable of it, to any other Person whatsoever:

5. That neither will we mention it, after we have done this, to any other Person:

6. That we will not make any Exception to any of these Rules, unless we think ourselves absolutely obliged in Conscience so to do.

John Jones
John Nelson
Wm Sherr
John Harris

John Wesley
Charles Wesley
John: Lumbard.
Perronet
Jonth. Reeves
Jos. Connely
Perronet
Tho. Maxfield.
J. Dowdes.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE REV. JOHN AND CHARLES
WESLEY, AND SEVERAL OF THE PREACHERS : WITH AN
ENGRAVING.

THE annexed document is a *fac simile* of an agreement between the parties whose names it bears. The hand-writing is that of Mr. John Wesley. It is a fine illustration of the spirit of those blessed men whom the God of all grace employed as a means of reviving religion in these lands, and is worthy of being preserved for the moral benefit of Christians in general, and especially of those who are united together in the holy ministry.

HYMN ON FRIENDSHIP.

VOL. II.—PAGE 463.

FRIENDSHIP divine, thy praise I sing,
Descendant of the heavenly King,
Thou fairest of the' angelic kind,
Thou copy of the perfect Mind,
Vouchsafed to mortals from above,
To teach our hearts that God is love.

Thee, thine ally, the heaven-born Muse,
Throughout this lower world pursues,
Thy lovely lineaments to trace,
And point thee to our fallen race,
If haply some thy charms may see,
And Paradise regain in thee.

But who on earth with thee is blest ?
Or where doth sacred Friendship rest ?
Shall we to Kings and courts repair ?
Alas ! thy name alone is there !
Thou canst not dwell with guileful art,
Or harbour in a selfish heart.

Thou never didst the wicked join,
Or cast thy pearls to dogs and swine ;
Howe'er they touch with lips profane,
And take thy hallow'd name in vain :
Who will not to their Maker bend,
Who fear no God can love no friend.

Seldom, alas ! thy silken cord
Hath bound a subject to his Lord ;
For how should contraries be join'd,
A low with an imperious mind ?

Or two so distant in degree,
Descend, arise, and meet in thee?

Falsely to thee the great pretend ;
Not all their gold can buy a friend ;
Who fancy thee their easy spoil,
Attracted by a high-born smile ;
Thou wilt not yield thy treasures up
To crown their impudence of hope.

Thee to procure how fond their boast !
The beggars cannot bear the cost ;
Nor *will* the flatter'd worms submit,
To lay their honours at thy feet,
Give up their life in Friendship's name,
And sacrifice their dearer fame.

Strangers to truth, how can it be
That such should suffer it from thee !
And therefore banish'd from their sight,
Thou tak'st thine everlasting flight,
Nor stoop'st again to souls so mean,
When Pride has fix'd the gulf between.

Far from the world thy calm retreat,
The *needy* rich, and *vulgar* great,
Who mourn their impotence of power,
And want relief amidst their store ;
For *thy* support the wretches sigh,
And pine in vain for Love's supply.

Poor is the man by slaves adored,
Of kneeling worlds the friendless Lord :
The blessings of a friend to' obtain,
A thousand barter'd worlds were gain ;
Yet none that blessing can bestow,
But HE who died to save his foe !

That happy man whom Jesus loves,
And with *peculiar* smiles approves,
On him the angel shall descend,
And God shall bless him with a friend ;
To none but chosen vessels given,
The highest favourites of heaven.

THE END.

199

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